



Award of Distinction

Public Radio International

by Farzam Yazdanseta

Level
Course

Graduate
ARCH 601: Graduate Topical Design Studio
aesthetics | media | politics Advanced Design

Advisor/Instructor
Principal Investigator
Department/School

Michael Ambrose
Michael Ambrose
School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
University of Maryland



Summary description of project:

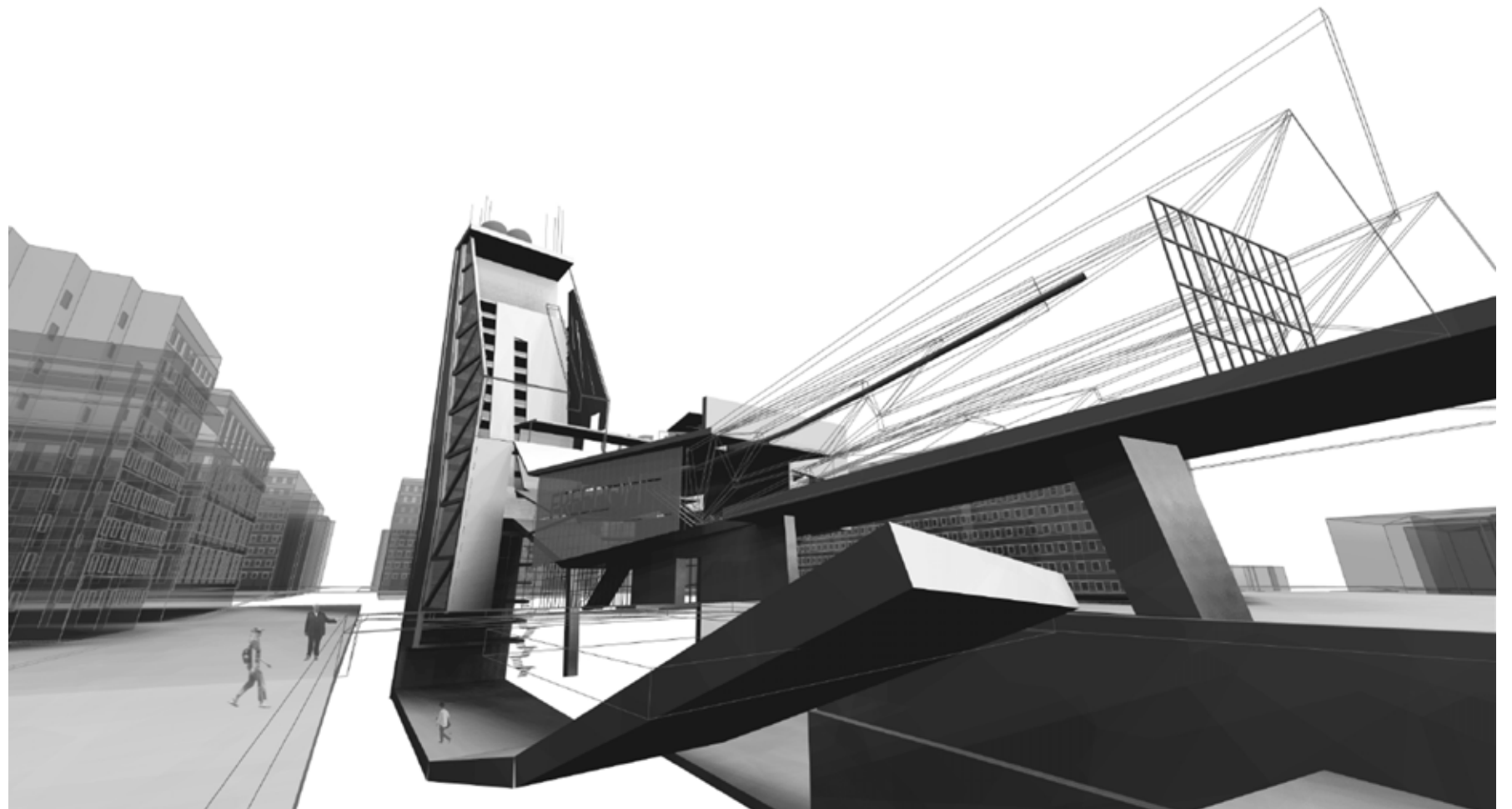
Twenty-first century media is filled with lies and deception. News conglomerates force their biases by filtering the truth and as a result, heighten the chaos and conflict in the world of politics. Public Radio International is a result of the multiplicity of cultural conflicts that come together at the context of District of Columbia, a zone filled with political chaos and imbalance. Public Radio International is a space of contention where both its private and public realm are tasked to bring together conflicting political viewpoints.

Public Radio International uses two conflicting physical geometries of District of Columbia and cultural and the never-ending political imbalance existent in the District, nation, and the world to establish its architectural language.

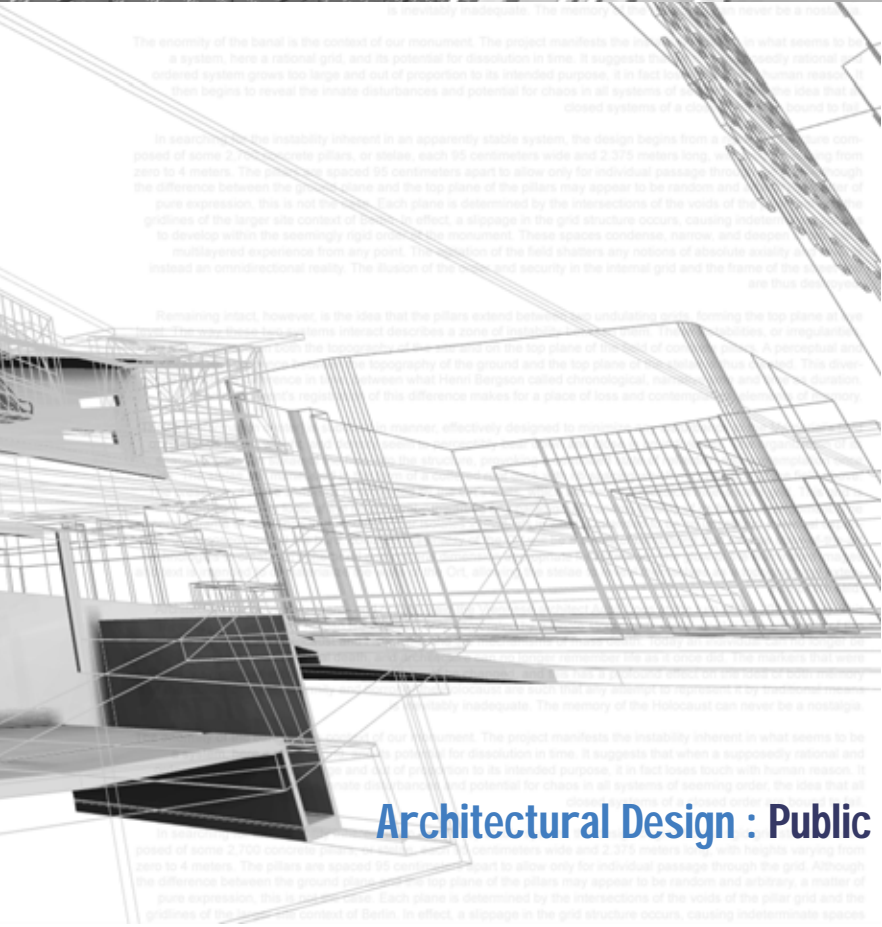
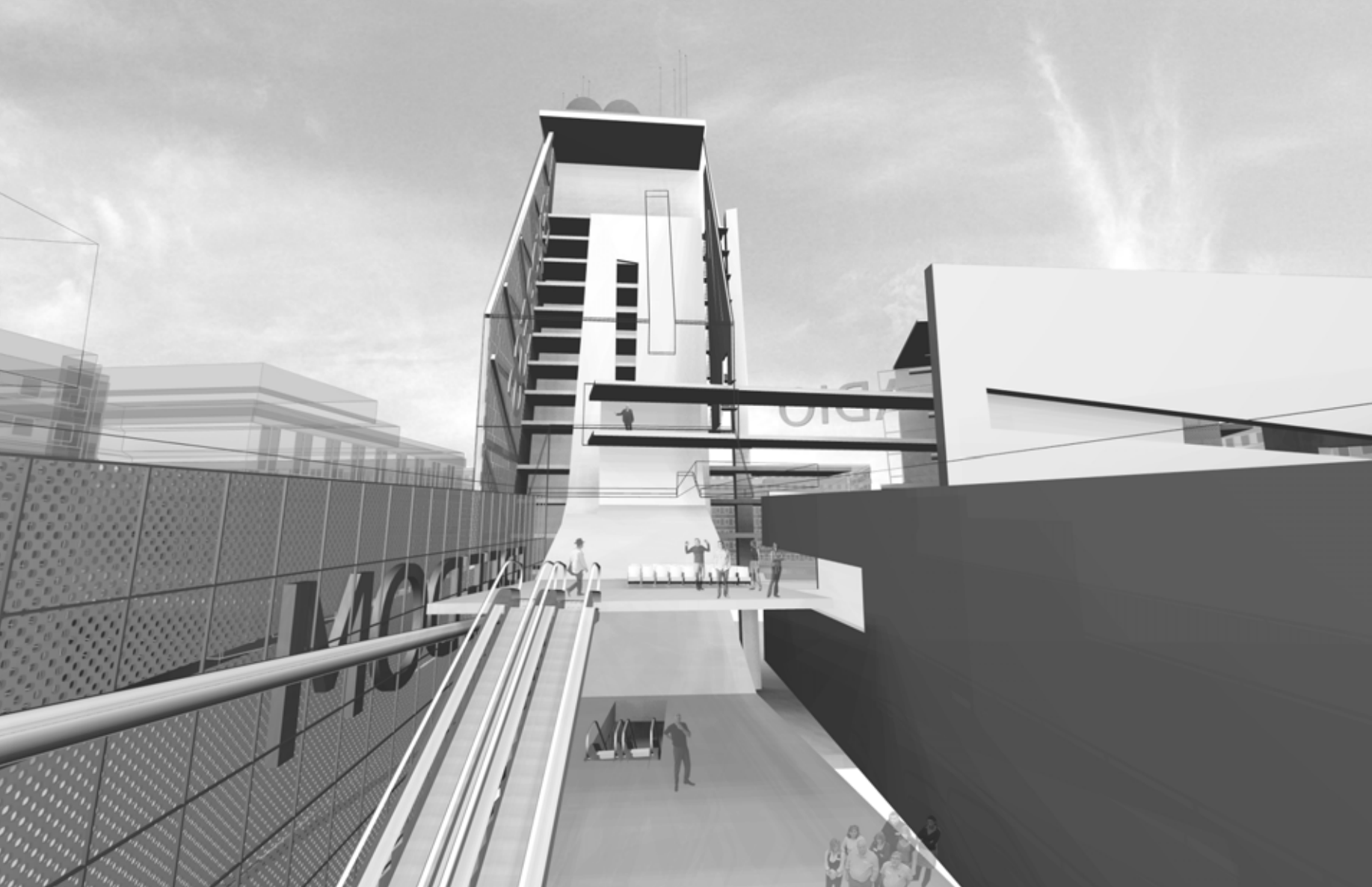
These constant multiple forces fragment and deconstruct the landscape of Washington D.C. to contextualize the site in order to embed the building as part of the landscape.

Public Radio International overcomes the speed of the world of news and media by establishing a transient architectural language. Fragmented pieces are in constant motion to demonstrate a dynamic environment to encourage contentious debates aimed at revealing the truth.

This project was done in an advanced elective design studio that has been positioned in the curriculum for the student that wants to further explore digital design/media through computer modeling and digital representation and provides an opportunity for graduate students from different studios to collaborate. In this course digital design media is understood not simply as a tool for visualization but as a generative design tool and process for the derivation of form and its development/transformation. This is intended as a special topics course that evolves and varies with each faculty member and their particular research interests.



CON(TENSION)



The emptiness of the band is the context of our monument. The project manifests the instability inherent in what seems to be a system, here a rational grid, and its potential for dissolution in time. It suggests that when a supposedly rational and ordered system grows too large and out of proportion to its intended purpose, it in fact loses touch with human reason. It begins to reveal the static disturbances and potential for chaos in all systems of seemingly order. The idea that all closed systems of a certain complexity are ultimately unstable is a well-known principle of chaos theory.

In search of the instability inherent in an apparently stable system, the design begins from a grid of columns, or columns of some 2,100 columns, each 30 centimeters wide and 2.275 meters long, which are spaced 30 centimeters apart to allow only for individual passage through the grid. Although the difference between the ground plane and the top plane of the pillars may appear to be random and arbitrary, a matter of pure expression, this is not the case. Each plane is determined by the intersections of the voids of the pillar grid and the gridlines of the larger site context of 2.275 meters. In effect, a slippage in the grid structure occurs, causing indeterminate voids to develop within the seemingly rigid and ordered monument. These spaces condense, narrow, and disappear, creating a multilayered experience from any point. The distortion of the field shatters any notions of absolute stability and instead an omnidirectional reality. The illusion of order and security in the internal grid and the frame of the site are thus dissolved.

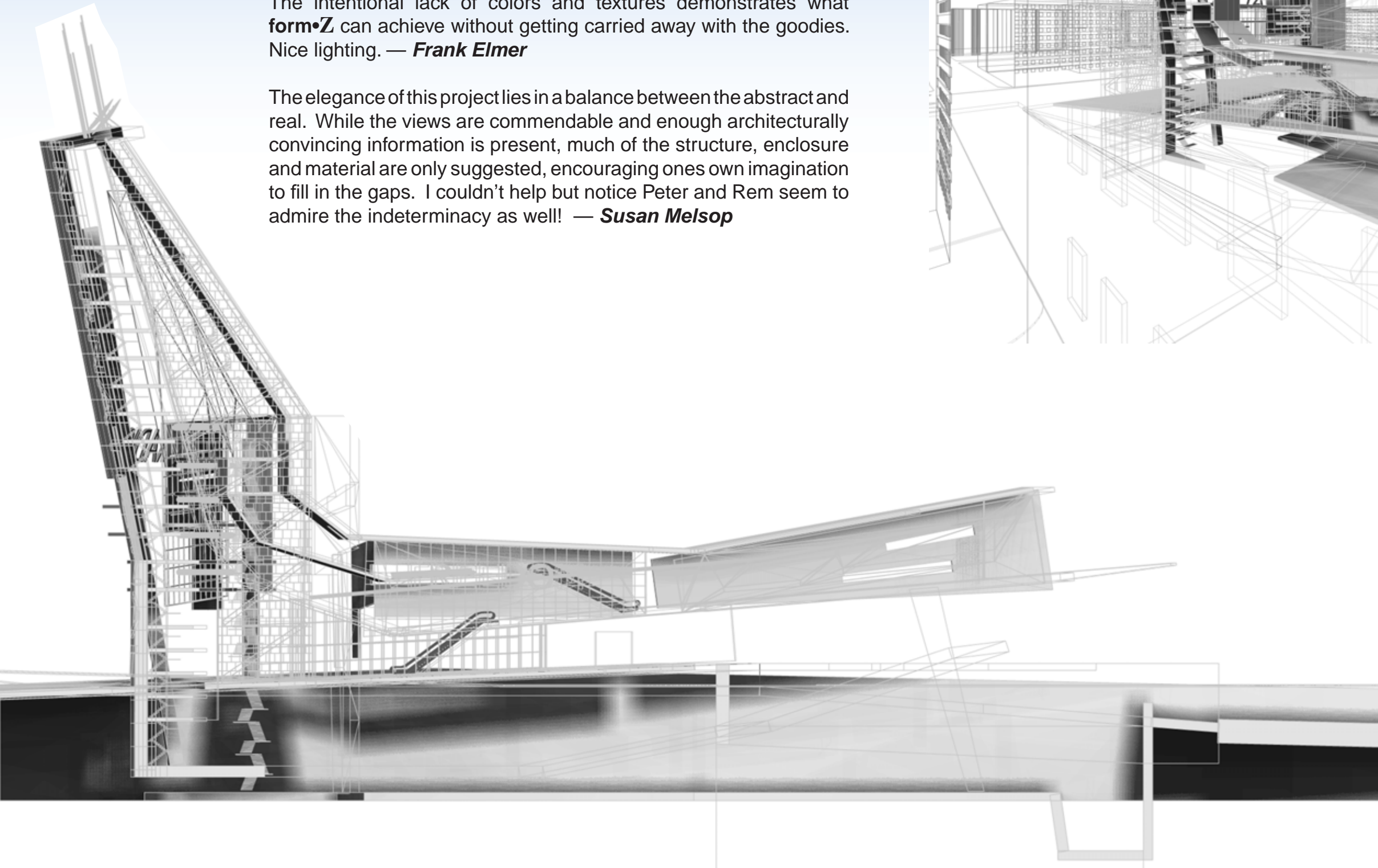
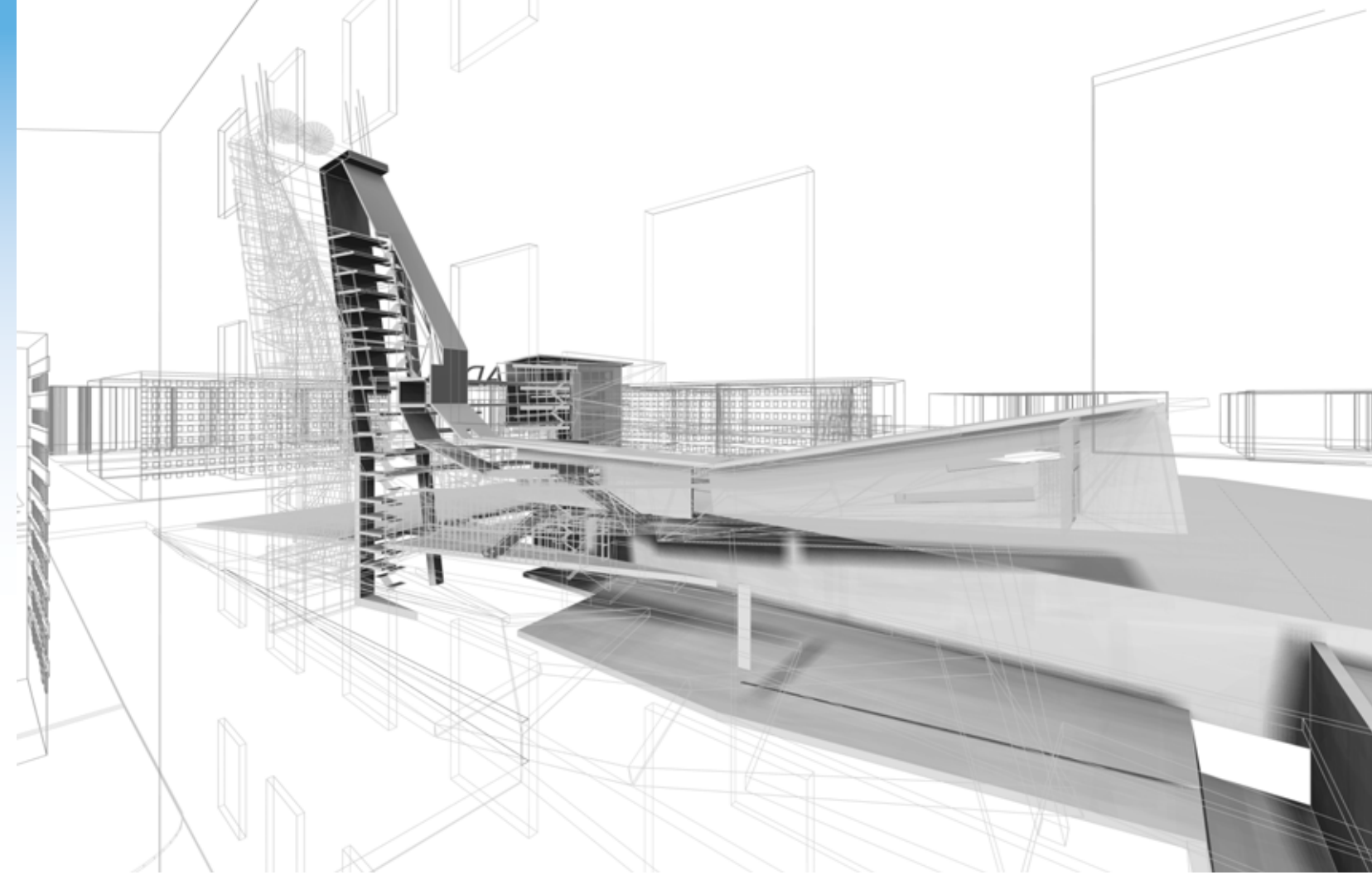
Remaining intact, however, is the idea that the pillars extend between the undulating ground plane and the top plane in a way that is not intended. It describes a zone of tension, or irregularity, that exists between the top plane of the grid and the ground plane. This distortion is a result of the topography of the ground and the top plane of the grid. This distortion is what Heidegger called 'chronological', a distortion of time that is not a matter of mere sequence, but a matter of difference. This difference makes for a place of loss and connection, a place where the memory of the monument can never be a nostalgic one.

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Jury comments:

Detailed and complex model. Elegant use of **form•Z** in rendering. The intentional lack of colors and textures demonstrates what **form•Z** can achieve without getting carried away with the goodies. Nice lighting. — **Frank Elmer**

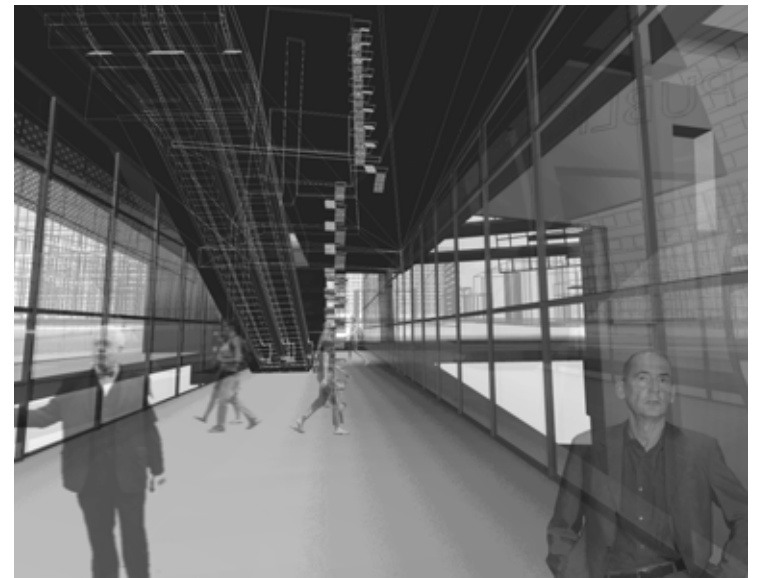
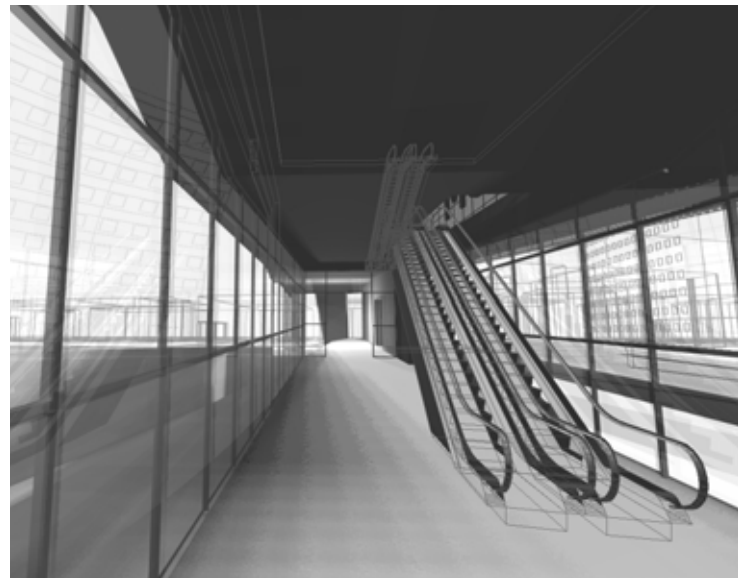
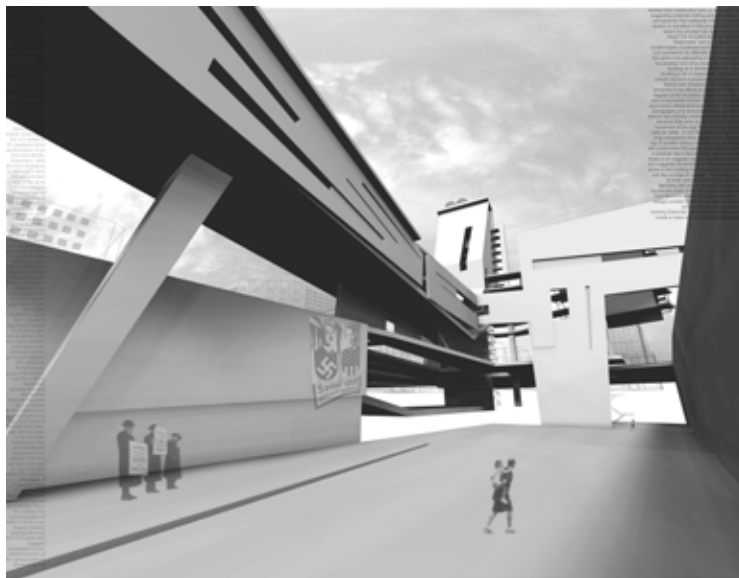
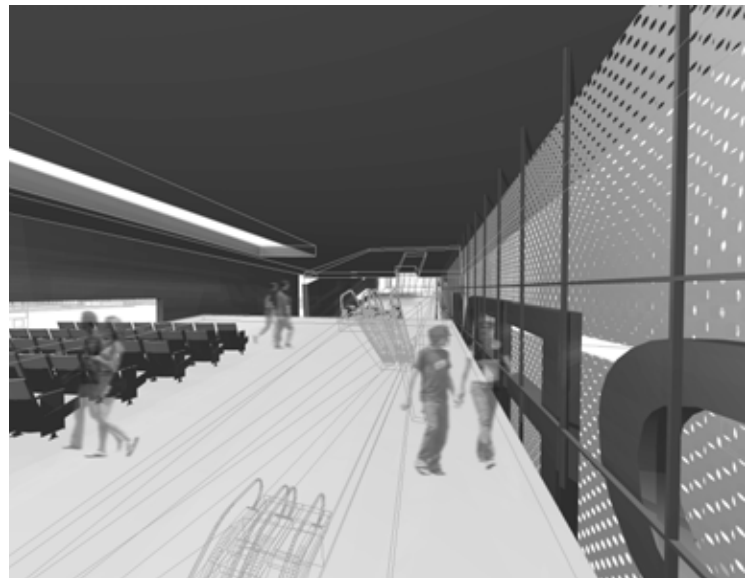
The elegance of this project lies in a balance between the abstract and real. While the views are commendable and enough architecturally convincing information is present, much of the structure, enclosure and material are only suggested, encouraging ones own imagination to fill in the gaps. I couldn't help but notice Peter and Rem seem to admire the indeterminacy as well! — **Susan Melsop**





Eisenman has remarked to the effect that when one is engaged in the teaching of Corbusian formal systems it is almost impossible even for the likes of Eisenman to distinguish Rowe's reading of these systems from LeCorbusiers' own. Rowe had already developed the terms for a high formalist interpretation of modern architecture primarily through his elaborate readings of LeCorbusier's 'contribution to that discourse would be to suspend formal analysis on a structuralist base that would ultimately undermine the way American formalism had institutionalised modernism in the post-war context. Rowe's mannerist modern concept of form as the relation of space and structure is now understood as the more provisional outcome of movement practised by Eisenman. Here the value of 'frontality' that had accompanied the flat pictorial associations in plans and analyses by Rowe is undermined by the temporal displacements provided by Eisenman's axonometrics. 'Frontality' which was a staple of the Rowe repertoire consisted of gyrating a building around horizontal and

collage city presents a picture that promises an alternative and a textual visual art Rowe however did not have the same extended but pictorial engagement. The one formalism contained in collage city draws particular attention to the emblematic image of Collage City as particularly Barry claim that destructs any measure from the optical to the ideographic realm. The realistic. Firstly because it introduces a new representational system it embeds actual pieces of reality in its pictorial ground which may be often accepted to be a formalist. Rowe more than an illustration of form and space. For a formal spatial notation system. One can say that essays indicate a limiting condition in understanding it. There is hardly a sentence in his pre-1988 essay without a mix of formal and iconographical. Eisenman has remarked to the effect that when one is engaged in the teaching of Corbusian formal systems it is almost impossible even for the likes of Eisenman to distinguish Rowe's reading of these systems from LeCorbusiers' own. Rowe had already developed the terms for a high formalist interpretation of modern architecture primarily through his elaborate readings of LeCorbusier's 'contribution to that discourse would be to suspend formal analysis on a structuralist base that would ultimately undermine the way American formalism had institutionalised modernism in the post-war context. Rowe's mannerist modern concept of form as the relation of space and structure is now understood as the more provisional outcome of movement practised by Eisenman. Here the value of 'frontality' that had accompanied the flat pictorial associations in plans and analyses by Rowe is undermined by the temporal displacements provided by Eisenman's axonometrics. 'Frontality' which was a staple of the Rowe repertoire consisted of gyrating a building around horizontal and



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mass death. Today an individual can no longer be certain to die an individual death. The markers that were formerly symbols of individual life and death must be changed, and this has a profound effect on the idea of the monument. The enormity and horror of the Holocaust are such that any attempt to represent it by traditional means is inevitably inadequate. The memory of the Holocaust can never be a nostalgia.

The banal is the context of our monument. The project manifests the instability of a system, here a rational grid, and its potential for dissolution in time. A supposedly rational and ordered system grows too large and out of proportion, it in fact loses touch with human reason. It then begins to reveal the latent potential for chaos in all systems of seeming order, the idea that all closed systems of a closed order are bound to fail.

The instability inherent in an apparently stable system, the design begins from a rigid grid structure composed of some 2,700 concrete pillars, or stelae, each 95 centimeters wide and 2.37 meters long, with heights varying from zero to 4 meters. The pillars are spaced 95 centimeters apart to allow only for individual passage through the grid. Although the difference between the ground plane and the top plane of the pillars may appear to be random and arbitrary, in fact it is determined by the intersections of the grid and the gridlines of the larger site context of Berlin. In effect, a slippage occurs, causing indeterminate spaces to develop within the seemingly rigid order. These spaces condense, narrow, and deepen to provide a multilayered experience from any point. The agitation of the field shatters any notions of absolute axiality and reveals instead an omnidirectional reality. The illusion of the order and security of the internal grid and the frame of the street grid are thus destroyed.

However, the idea that the pillars extend between two undulating grids, forming a level. The way these two systems interact describes a zone of instability between them. These instabilities, or irregularities, are superimposed on both the topography of the site and on the top plane of the field of concrete pillars. A perceptual and conceptual divergence between the ground and the top plane of the stelae is thus created. This divergence in time, between what Henri Bergson called chronological, narrative time and time as duration, the monument's registration of this difference makes for a place of loss and contemplation, elements of memory.

The Ort [information center] is subdued in manner, effectively designed to minimize any disturbance to the Memorial's field of pillars. Its mass, weight, and density seem to perceptibly bear down and close in on individuals. The organization of its space extends the stelae of the field into the structure, provoking a continued state of reflection and contemplation once inside. The stelae are manifested in the form of a coffered roof deck with rib spacing which matches that of the field above. The presence of these elements is subverted by the Ort's walls, which are set on a classical nine-square grid. This grid is rotated against the logic of the field, thereby thwarting any paradigmatic understanding of its formal arrangement. The uncertain frame of reference that results further isolates individuals in what is intended to be an unsettling, personal experience. Juxtaposed against the hard, concrete materiality of the Ort will be a series of exhibitions that will use state-of-the-art technologies to create an ephemeral and visceral dimension appropriate for reflection. Illuminated images and text is intended to dematerialize the walls of the Ort, to reveal themselves as a topographical extension of the field. As the Viennese architect Adolf Loos at the turn of the 20th century said, the mechanism of mass death. Today an individual can no longer be certain to die an individual death, and their memory must be changed, and this has a profound effect on the idea of both the monument and the memorial. The enormity and horror of the Holocaust are such that any attempt to represent it by traditional means is inevitably inadequate. The memory of the Holocaust can never be a nostalgia.

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NORTH ELEVATION

The vast presence of glass on the Nunotani facades contributes to Eisenman's concept of taking the emphasis away from the datum horizontality of the ground plane. This strategy of transparency employed by Eisenman can be related to Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzkys' article on Transparency, Literal and Phenomenal. Transparency however implies more than an optical character. Transparency means a simultaneous perception of different spatial locations. Space not only recedes but fluctuates in a continuous activity. At the Nunotani project the transparency adopted considerably reduces the heaviness of the structure wherein glass intervenes to induce lightness to visual perception. The irregular forms of the glass on the facades can be related to Rowe's and Slutzkys' article wherein they say that the transparency ceases to be that which is perfectly clear and becomes instead that which is clearly ambiguous. The abstract forms of glass in this project contributes to the reading of the building as that which is not static and is in a continuous state of unrest. This aspect or quality of non-static and unrest can be related to the art form of collage. Thus the fluctuating configurations of transparency adopted by Eisenman here permits the genesis of a typically architectural space.

21st century media is filled with lies and deception. News conglomerates force their biases by filtering the truth and as a result heighten the chaos and conflict in the world of politics. Public Radio International is a result of the multiplicity of cultural conflicts that come together at the context of district of Columbia, a zone filled with political chaos and imbalance. Public Radio International is a space of contention where both its private and public realm are tasked to bring together conflicting political viewpoints. Public Radio International uses two conflicting physical geometries of District of Columbia and cultural and the never-ending political imbalance existent in the District, Nation and the world to establish its architectural language. these Constant Multiple forces fragment and deconstruct the landscape Washington, DC to and to contextualize the site in order embed the building as part of the landscape. Public Radio International overcomes the speed of the world of news and media by establishing a transient architectural language. Fragmented pieces are in constant motion to demonstrate a dynamic environment to encourage contentious debates aim at revealing the truth. Metaphysics of the ground plane is the subject of investigation in this project

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CONFLICT (METAPHYSICS) OF THE GROUND PLANE

