A Town Landmark for Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico

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CONCEPT

My design concept for the city of Morelia, Michoacan in Mexico was developed from a fusion of necessity and hope for the future. The history of Morelia is very much intertwined with the development of a historic aqueduct system built in the 1500s. My architectural response was developed in two parts, the first was the development of an elevated linear park using the path set by the historical aqueduct. This provides a physical connection between the southern parts of the city to the more developed downtown square. The second element is a viewing tower that will provide a vantage point for seeing these paths of history. The viewing tower soars over the city's skyline allowing visitors to have a visual connection with the entire city. This view provides the hope and inspiration to set forward an understanding of how it is best to develop the city beyond its current boundaries. The materials used for this new structure are meant to be in contrast to the materials of the historic aqueduct.

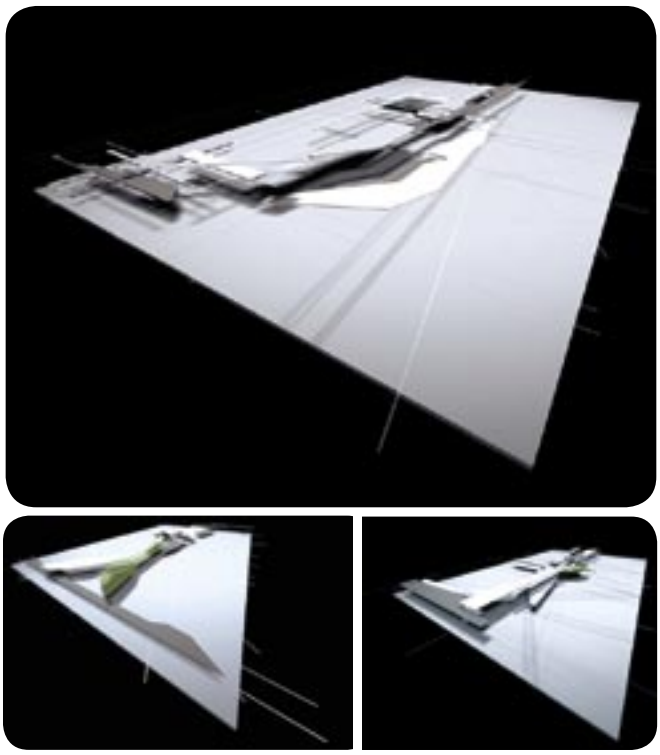
SITE ANALYSIS

form•Z was an essential tool for developing the dissection analysis strategy for understanding the complicated set of infrastructure systems that make up the modern city of Morelia. A series of analog diagrammatic, collage, and relief models studies were developed. With **form•Z** the analog studies were morphed into digital reliefs and perspectives and provided a framework for designing the architectural vocabulary for the linear park and viewing tower.

The project itself started developing by the forces of the city captured in digital form. The experimentation with digital diagrams provided the foundation for the expression that needed to be part of the final architecture. **form•Z** provided the ground on developing this idea as it created a dynamic in layering effects that started to generate opportunities for spaces at different levels in interesting dynamic shapes that backed up the original concept. Creating a digital layering effect presented almost endless possibilities for new architecture to be developed as it interacted with the city. **form•Z** provided a quick way to generate a variety of composite diagrams for creating a language on which to base the project design.

ARCHITECTURAL VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

After dissecting the city through a series of diagrammatic studies using **form•Z**, the design of the elevated linear park and tower became a way to provide linkages to the fragmented city. It was important that the new architecture not overpower the existing conditions of the place or impose a static program that did not allow a freedom of movement and transparency. The intention of the elevated park was to create a more personal interaction with the city in a series of spaces that would allow viewing of the city at different levels.



CONCLUSION

The use of **form•Z** as the digital studio design tool opened infinite windows of possibilities that allowed the design to be pushed to limits never seen before and allowed the design process to test different horizons. In exploring my design concept with **form•Z**, I was able to work much faster then in any media and develop my project along the lines of my initial analysis. **form•Z** was used in part as the main design tool and other times as a complementary tool to other traditional design strategies, but it was always an important part of the design process.