

Hybrid Systems: Reconstructing New Spatial Networks

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In the data cloud of collective consciousness, it's one of those issues that just seem to keep popping up. Where did I start? Where did I end? First and foremost, it's that flash of insight, a way of looking at the fragments of time. Check it: visual mode—open source, a kinematoscope of the unconscious: a bullet that cuts through everything like a Doc Edgerton, E.J. Marek or Muybridge flash frozen frame. You look for the elements of the experience, and if you think about it, even the word “analysis” means to break down something into its component parts. Stop motion: weapons drawn, flip the situation into a new kind of dawn... It's only a rendition of Breton's dream-surrealism as a mid-summer night's scheme, check the drift in the 21st Situationist scene. A scenario on the screen: camera obscura, the perspective unbound walking through a crowd, gun drawn, firing wildly until everyone is gone... could it be another version, another situation...like the police whose 19 out of 41 bullets shot Diallo dead or the kids that walk into the schools to live out their most powerful stunningly banal lives by ending their classmates'. This is how it is in the sign of the times—an advertising link to the symbols of a lawless world, something, anything to grasp onto to give meaning to the ultra swirl...

Or something like that.”

--Paul D. Miller (DJ Spooky), Material Memories, Time And The Cinematic Image

The Master Studio at the University of New Mexico was developed to allow students the opportunity to engage

in self-directed experimentation and pursue the development of complex ideas in preparation for professional practice. The focus for this studio was to develop modes of inquiry that expand beyond simplistic functional practices or formalistic attitudes toward architectural space.

The primary objective was to design a contemporary archive and investigate how digital information redefines our understanding of this spatial entity. The archive has traditionally been a place where a body of information is stored and manifests itself in many different forms. We tend to associate the archive with museums, libraries, cemeteries and web databases. For Michele Foucault, in The Archaeology of Knowledge, he defines the archive as a conceptual structure that encapsulates a set of principles that govern adaptive organization strategies for acquiring knowledge. These adaptive strategies provide a reconsideration of new programmatic and spatial tactics that allow for the dissemination of information transference.

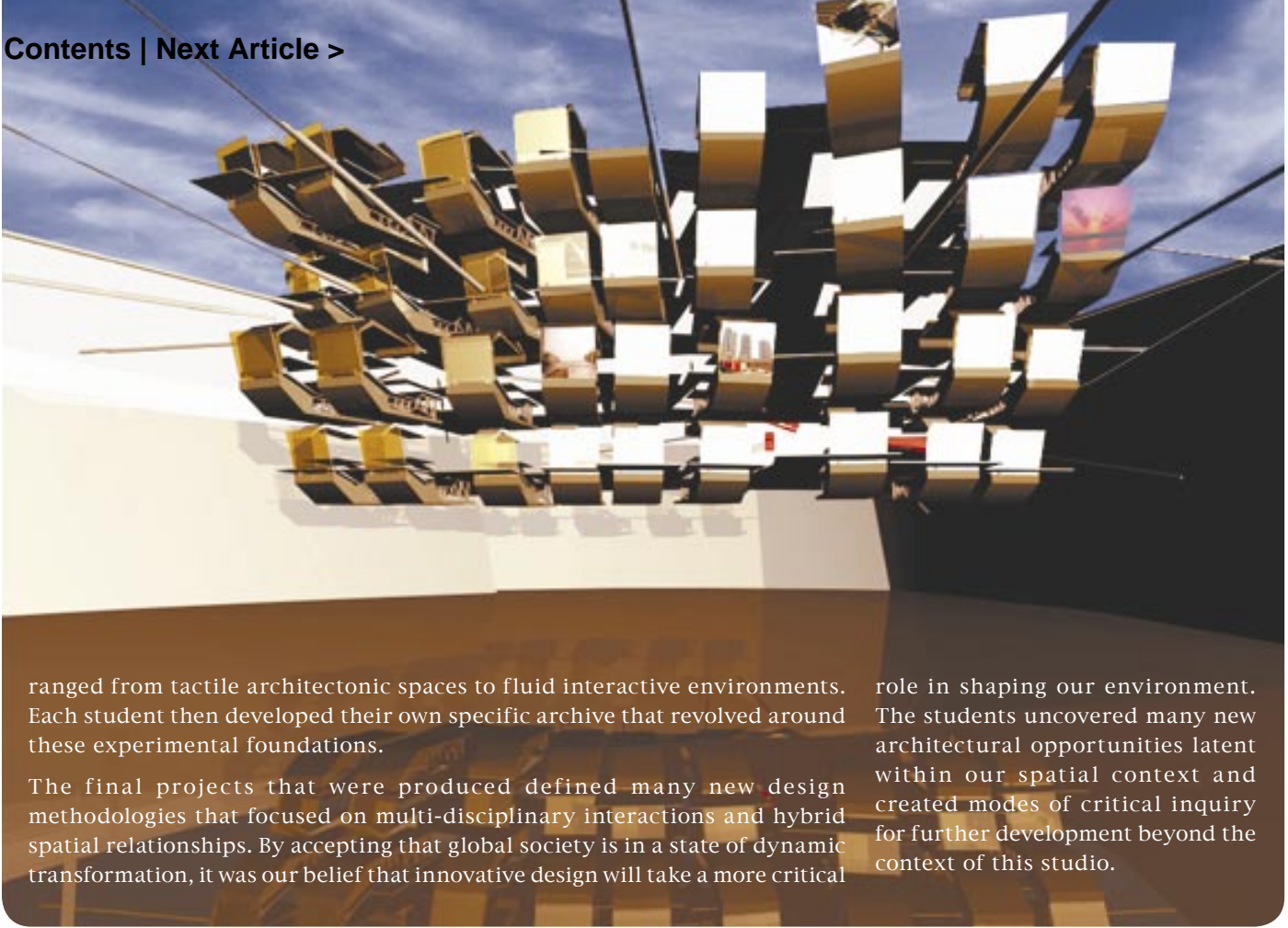
The studio brief called for the design of the Canadian Music Hall of Fame and New Music Laboratory in Toronto, Canada. This framework was intended to allow the students the opportunity to critically examine the impact that digital information is having on contemporary culture and investigate how it begins to reconfigure architectural spatial conditions.

This research began by searching for parallel precedents that focused in on the realm of electronic music where many artists have challenged

traditional musical structures and created mutations generated through digital applications. By looking into the music of Kraftwerk, Derrick May, Dj Spooky, and abstract visions of Phillip Glass, the students began to understand how these musicians utilize technologically based strategies for creating new poetic compositions.

This studio then began a series of experimental exercises that allowed the students the opportunity to explore new spatial and informational strategies for design. The nucleus for this experimentation revolved around a digital to analog foundation that was developed by Dr. Julio Bermudez and Bennett Neiman, utilizing a four-stage transformation process of altering between analog artifacts and digital simulation. The experimentation began with a series of analog models that were developed on hybrid observations (digital and virtual) found in our environment. This exercise was influenced by texts of several authors including works by Walter Benjamin, Gilles Deleuze, Paul D. Miller and Paul Virilio. This theoretical dialogue influenced the students to reconsider traditional design methodologies and search for new applications for these hybrid spatial systems.

The spatial data was then translated into **form•Z** where a series of digital models began to probe for spatial trajectories that could be further developed programmatically. The complexity of the systems that emerged focused on relationships of networking, time, and spatial sequencing. These principles became the foundation for a series of performative structures that



ranged from tactile architectural spaces to fluid interactive environments. Each student then developed their own specific archive that revolved around these experimental foundations.

The final projects that were produced defined many new design methodologies that focused on multi-disciplinary interactions and hybrid spatial relationships. By accepting that global society is in a state of dynamic transformation, it was our belief that innovative design will take a more critical

role in shaping our environment. The students uncovered many new architectural opportunities latent within our spatial context and created modes of critical inquiry for further development beyond the context of this studio.

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