

“WAX-WINGED

ANGELS

*IN
BAS RELIEF“*

“BNPND -THE WORKS”

*“A multi-part compendium of heart-break
and hard-knocks,
in the form of architectural space
and poetic verse.”*

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Dome view

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024

BNPD stands for Benjamin Nelson Pennell Design, a practice which began in 2017 with the commission of a small residence in Northern California (titled 210 Semple St). We provide ordinary architectural services for additions, remodels, ground-up construction, and feasibility studies. When the occasion calls for it, we involve ourselves in the construction as well; physically making custom-built furniture, ornamental applique, fiberglass sculpture, and structural steelwork.

This work sample includes project photographs, construction documents, concept drawings, and written descriptions. Each description starts with the basic facts; and ends with a personal reflection, poem, or anecdote. The main purpose of these "extras" is to entertain and excite...

To enlighten is, I believe, secondary...

Mortality

Though most architects are in a state of hiding, fearful of exercising their uncompromised expertise, one day we will emerge from our garrets and hovels.

"Big Builders," with their bulldozers on the ground, and their politicians in their back pocket, they fear this eventuality! But we will take back these war-torn cities of ours, and we will adorn them once again with an ornamentation commensurate with the greatness of our noble species.

There is all the space in the world, but only the time which our mortality permits.

Michelangelo

Michelangelo's slaves portray both the subject and the sculptor in a state of bondage. The subject is held captive by the uncarved form; and the sculptor is rendered powerless by the awesome impenetrability of the material block.

There is a melancholic sense of defeat in all of Michelangelo's unfinished works, but in the slaves there is a feeling of hope; perhaps they too will burst free.

His is the story of the true maker!

Here is the first of such extras:

"As a matter of course and without exception, the following (built) projects were realized strictly against the background of catastrophic mechanical failure, reckless financial speculation, unmitigated existential danger, and unending, unnerving rain and wind and cold. Nevertheless!

Rather than wilt away at my desk idly, buried behind a century of cold-blooded, computerized correspondence, I have, of necessity, chosen to remain in the field - on site, at all times! Like many before me, it is in this hellish crucible of toil from which I simultaneously derive inspiration as a working artist, and maintain my authority as an independent architect.

In the last six years, I have aged nineteen. I was nearly killed twice; I developed an operable glitch in my lower-back;

and worst of all, my boyish-young face now bears the premature lines and blemishes that only a schizophrenic passion could explain!

All the same, there is a redemptive beauty in my face; as well as the architectural works. There is toughness, severity, imperfection, an aesthetic most industrial; and yet there is a sweetness too. An effervescent strength: a soul trapped in flesh, a soul trapped in steel; both made into a man, then gifted the grace to burst free, of their own volition.

The words you read, and the images you will see come from a person who has paid the cost, and has made the works richer by this fact. From origins most prosaic, emerge sparkling, wax-winged angels in bas relief!

And every so often, a life is born."

...Please enjoy

TABLE OF



Project / Title
Dying Slave

Author
Michelangelo

Medium
Marble

Year
1515

001 300 John Lemley Ln



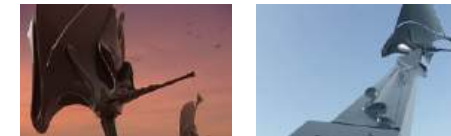
002 1011 2nd St



003 Samson's Lair



004 LA Street Light



005 Shasta Shinto Shed



006 Ex-Embryo



007 5278 College Ave



008 210 Semple St



CONTENTS

300 John Lemley Ln is self-built unsold spec house (and so it is presently my house) constructed in a town near Blacksburg, VA. It is approximately 2,700 sf in area, 44' in gross vertical height, and equipped with enough artistic and mechanical gadgetry to make one say, "My God, Who on earth built this house? It looks so austere, so imposing, so industrial! And yet it has the grace of palatial European splendor! The abstract curiosity of the early impressionists! The sum-tuoness of an Aalto or Loos!"

(The following excerpt was written several years ago... Optimistically, insanely, many many eons before the actual date of completion... Alas)

"With the might of my arm alone

Tange
The Tange house is both De Stijl modernism and a Japanese Kura. The main floor hovers gracefully.

Vernon
What wonderfully displaced lineaments! What a delightful lantern. Where are our present day lanterns? Spires?

The Lemley House is the bastard love child of Japanese-Americanana. East and West. Organic and Rigid.

and by the grace and mercy of God, I have willed my architecture into existence. Like when a mother is occasionally granted super-human strength and frees her trapped child from beneath a wrecked car, everyday I build with a tenacious fury that stems from both desperation and instinct. Scarcely can one find a single element, be it wood, metal, fiberglass, PVC, insulation, PEX piping that has not passed through my hands and received either my blessings or my toil.

Nobody could ride a horse like Napoleon, or wield a chisel like The Great Michaelangelo, or strum the harpsichord like Johann Sebastian Bach! To be more than a critic, a theorist, or even a visionary; I charge into the fray. I scrape paint on my blood-

ied hands and knees; I climb high into the air, swinging from guy-wires and climbing harnesses and sometimes nothing at all. Sanding, fastening, hoisting, planing; on the jobsite all is holy; all is miraculous; no task is beneath my reach.

I will finish this house in June, and (likely) it will eclipse The Mother's House in manneristic jest, the Savoye House in allegorical richness, and The Kaufmann House(s) as the iconic American dwelling."

And was it so??? History will decide.

"COPPER HEAD

LIFE BOAT

ANTI AQUARIAN"



Parking Lot
Form follows parking lots

Boke House
This is a house by Bernard Maybeck. It, along with most of his work lays 75% of the groundwork for my house on John Lemley Ln.

John Lemley
A Total Art Work. Palladio put a church front on his earliest villa's. I put inside this house the Dome of St Ivo and the helmet of R2-D2.

"JOHN LEMLEY LN"

Project / Title
Villa Sejjo

Author
Kenzo Tange

Location
Tokyo, JA

Year
1951

Project / Title
Mount Vernon

Author
Unknown

Location
Alexandria, VA

Year
1951

Project / Title
Boke House

Author
Bernard Maybeck

Location
Berkeley, CA

Year
1901

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln, Main Street View, Entry

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024





Herzog
HDM's plywood house, and the history of arts and crafts serve as the models for all exterior detailing.

Roof
The roof on the John Lemley House telescopically expands like the wings of a gliding b-17 bomber.

To live inside of a house, which was not once but repeatedly during the course of its creation, very nearly the cause of one's early demise, is to live like a conquering despot, in a land of barbarism. Revolt, in the form of materialistic degradation, is both possible and ever present. Nevertheless, for as long as your house remains, your reign, however grand, however tenuous, presides victorious.

For what is it to buy a house? Or merely draw one on the computer? Trifles!
Are nations bought and sold with pieces of paper?

I could buy the whole world some day, though it wouldn't be mine. I would rather build a house instead; for some things can only be conquered.

(Continues...)

IMITATION TERRA COTTA TOP



"GRAVITY PARAPHERNALIA

BOOST EJECTION

LUNAR

VESTIBULAR"

Project / Title
Plywood House

Author
Herzog and DeMeuron

Location
Basel, SW

Year
1985

Project / Title
Maison Planeix

Author
Le Corbusier

Location
Paris, FR

Year
1928

Project / Title
Villa Aldobrandini

Author
Giacomo Della Porta

Location
Froscati, IT

Year
1598

Project / Title
Trevi Fountain

Author
Giuseppe Pannini

Location
Rome, IT

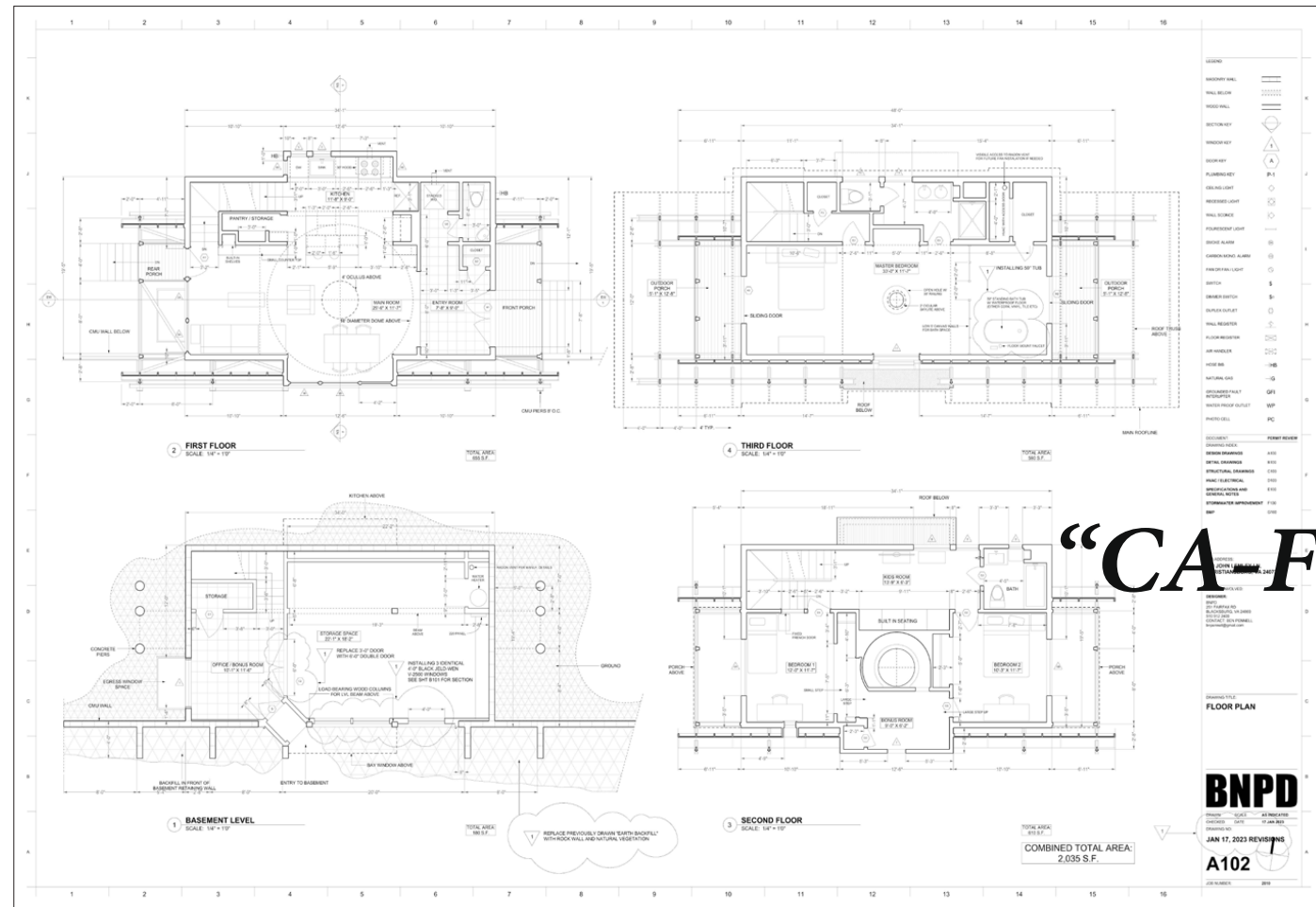
Year
1762

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln.

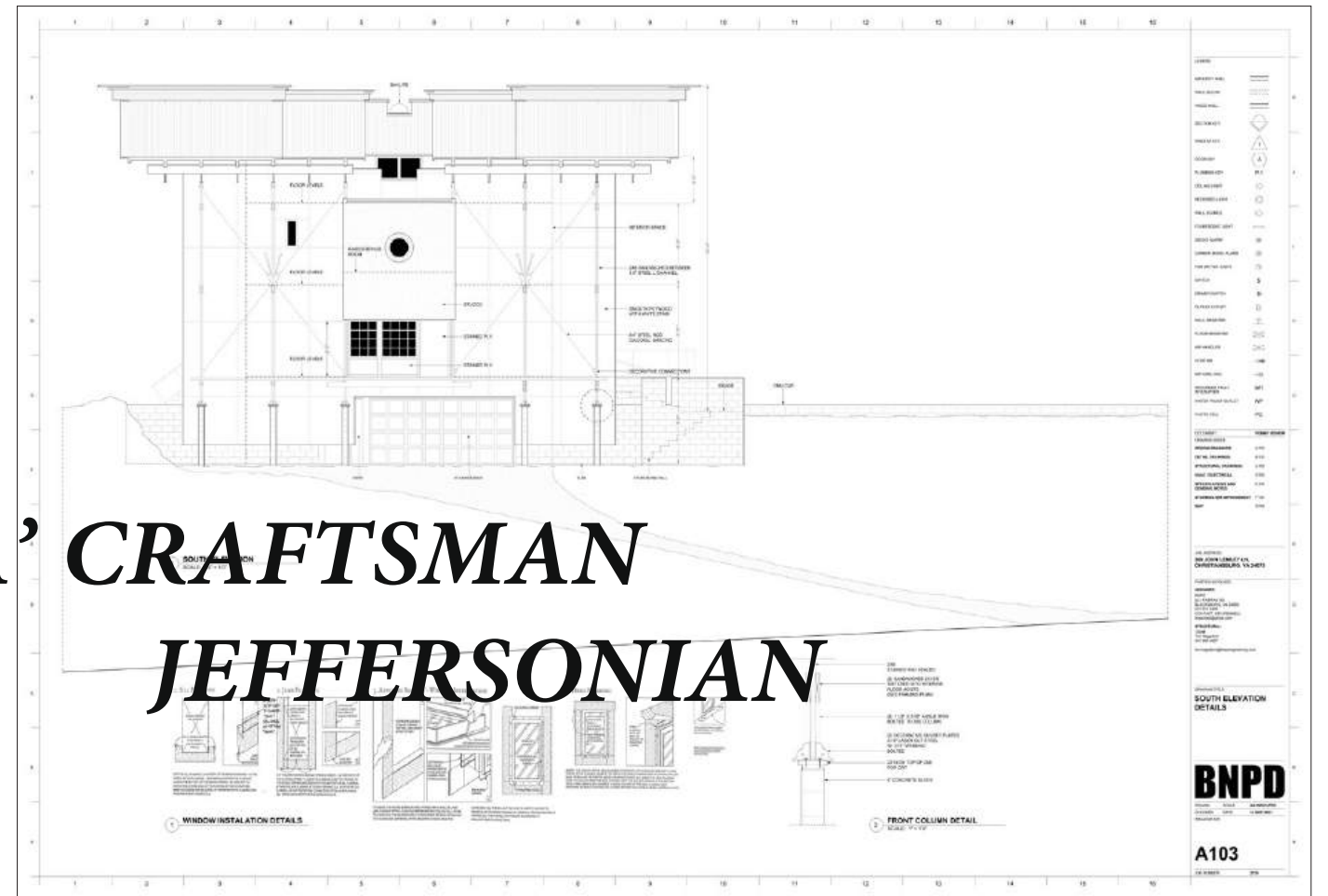
Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2025





“CA-FORNA” CRAFTSMAN JEFFERSONIAN

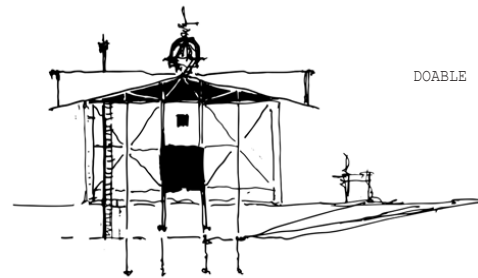


Anglo-Christian Plan
The house will function as any house normally would, though its plan type is based on a Christian Cruciform organization.



The dome gathers the movement and drama of the space, and penetrates the second and third floors above until it achieves release.

HINTERLAND”



Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Plan Drawing

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Elevation Rendering

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024

Mannerist Facade
The relatively humble 3 bedroom house has a large outboard, canted facade that's been stretched to 60 feet in length. Large roof gables cover decks and entries on the East and West Sides.

Steel Skeleton
In a subtle language reminiscent of Pompidou High Tech.

Framing Plans
The roof trusses were custom designed, and built on site. The interior structure is exposed pine wood. The exterior will feature complex steel webbing (shown below).

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Elevation Drawing

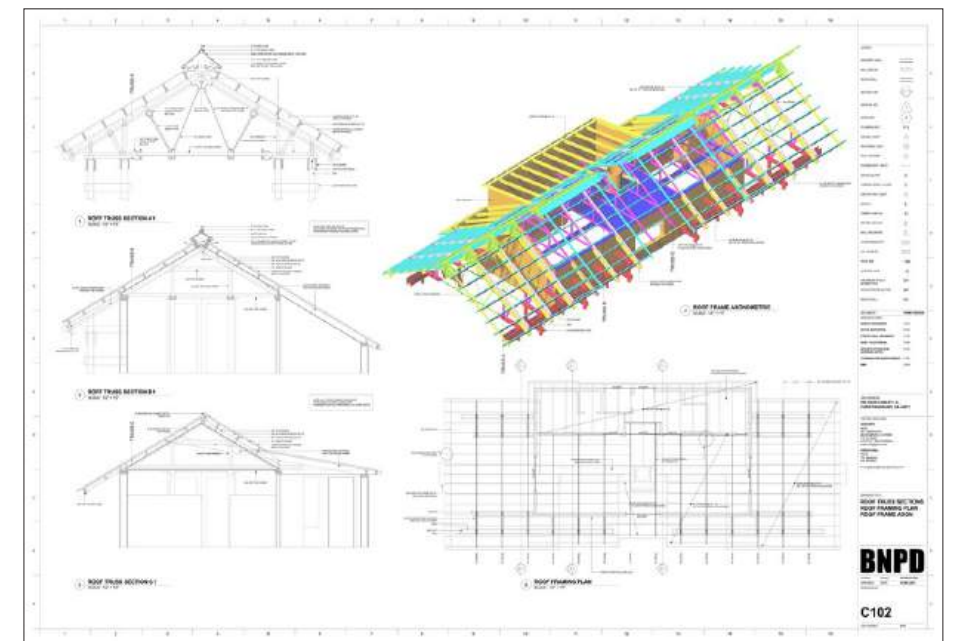
Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Structural Drawing

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024



Mind you, no mere "house" at that! I demand a splendid house, a "house's house;" a house built by the sweat of your brow, and the seat of your pants, and the strength of your will alone; against all. That is, against all the odds, against all the rain, against all the debt! Against an army of marching machines, hundreds of thousands of tiny foot-soldier-like nails, staples, pan-heads and copper-heads (snakes, yes); conspiring your total humiliation and unconditional surrender.

"Run away!" so says the box of nails. "Give up!" so says the pile of trash. "Go home!" I once heard from a roll of tape.

So then curse the tape! Fling it through a glass window, or put it in a box if you must, so that insubordinates, like the insolent tape, receive their just punishment.

(CONTINUES...)



Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Main Floor

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Second Floor

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024



Project / Title
Spiller Residence

Author
Frank Gehry

Location
Venice Beach, CA

Year
1980

Project / Title
Villa Mairea

Author
Alvar Aalto

Location
Noormarkku, FN

Year
1939



Project / Title
Stem Cell Research

Aalto and Gehry are stem cell clones. The top secret research began in the early twentieth century and concluded with the birth of yours truly sometime in the early ninties.

We are all the same.

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Bedrooms

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2024



Kids Room
The kids room on the second floor (first image pictured above) is equipped with a "secret room," accessible by two small openings proportioned for the height of a child.

Parents Room
The parents room (second image pictured above) has an exposed truss ceiling. The figure of the gable is there, but it is mostly masked by a web of pseudo-Japanese structural woodwork, and a series of white planes, floating freely in all three dimensions.

The threshold splits apart the house, revealing many layers: the main room, an intermediary, the volume of the dome, and then the rear of the house.

A house, or any structure, is not a single unit, but a living ecosystem; temporarily coaxed into fulfilling the will of man, innately structured to obey the laws of nature. Laws which are at the best of times inconvenient, and at the worst of times murderous. Hurricanes! Floods! Fire storms! The madman who invented such horrors conceived too their domestic counterpart:

Architecture.

Yes, Architecture! The tragic protagonist! The first and last bastion of defense; the pretense of civilization, **corrupted if not firstly by folly, then eventually by the weight of centuries;** and so in time made scarcely indecipherable from the furnace of bedlam from whence it came.

(CONTINUES...)



Wren
English Baroque architecture was a materially warm, yet formally sober contrast to its Italian counterpart.

Best English Churches:
St Stephen's Walbrook, Chapel Emmanuel. Both designed by the hand of none other than Sir Christopher.



Dome Horizon
Clean flowing curvature peers down at the cutting, geometric realm of disorder and confusion.



Fabrication
The primary dome shell was constructed out of fiberglass leaves. The upper portion, which splinters into fragments, was made out of welded laser cut steel. The image above shows the unpainted, unbonded joint between both systems.

The fiberglass allowed for the double curvature of the "Bell Shape," and the steel allowed for a non repetitive complexity and ornamental profile.

Together, unified, the two systems exemplify a future style which is both rational yet exuberant, economic yet decorative, etc etc.

"LIFESTYLE METABOLIC MEDICAL CHRISTIAN SCIENCE"

Project / Title
Villa Sagoy,
Main Floor

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2025

Project / Title
Emmanuel Chapel

Author
Christopher Wren

Location
London, EN

Year
1620

Project / Title
Villa Sagoy,
Under Construction

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2023





Ivo
St. Ivo, pictured below, is crowned with a dome of many shapes but one single center--one heirarchic gravitational pull which overrides the contradictory plan at the base.

The idea is about unity (and grace perhaps) in the midst of conflict.

Altar
The main floor is one single cruciform space. The short axis is the primary axis, pointing north, with the kitchen island acting as the altar.

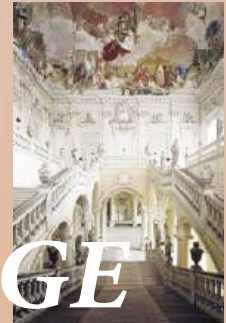
Triple Dome
The dome penetrates the third floor (pictured below), and then culminates in a skylight above.

Dome
The messy earth below--dark, geometric, gravity laden--rises upwards, transcending matter and material, becoming spirit. Confused, energetically charged, the forces continue to rise--in conjunction, in opposition-- toward their physical, corporeal release.

RAPTURE MAGNITRON™

Buildings are, ultimately and inalienably, savage. They are composed of "natural" materials, or at the very least organic matter, obliging our shaping them; or our splitting them, or splicing them, drying them, bending them, fastening, stacking, welding, corbeling, whatever; but in the due course of millenia, submit to only one master in perpetuity. (Continues...)

"POLYCOLONIC GARBAGE DISPOSAL"



CREATION OF ADAM



Project / Title
St. Ivo Alla Sapienza, Chapel

Author
Francesco Borromini

Location
Rome, IT

Year
1660



Project / Title
John Lemley Ln, Main Floor (above), Primary bath (left)

Location
Christiansburg, VA

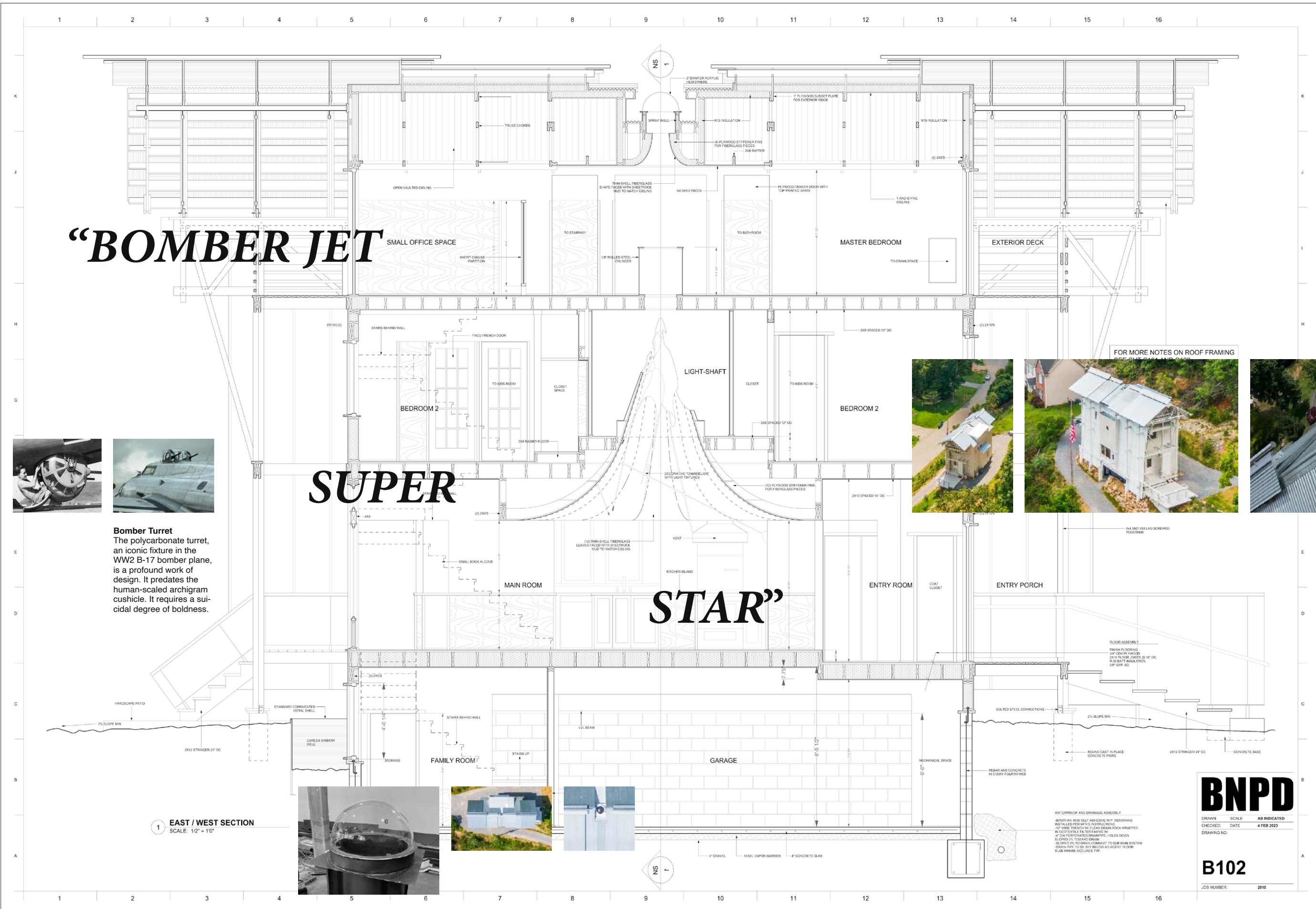
Year
2024

Project / Title
Wurzburg Residence

Author
Balthasar Neumann

Location
Wurzburg, Germany

Year
1780



“BOMBER JET

SUPER

STAR”



Bomber Turret
The polycarbonate turret, an iconic fixture in the WW2 B-17 bomber plane, is a profound work of design. It predates the human-scaled archigram cushion. It requires a suicidal degree of boldness.



FOR MORE NOTES ON ROOF FRAMING SEE SHEET B102-100

1 EAST / WEST SECTION
SCALE: 1/2" = 10"



WATERPROOF AND DRAINAGE ASSEMBLY
GUTTERING: 1/2" ALUMINUM GUTTER WITH 1/2" BRASS HANGERS. INSTALLED PER MFG'S INSTRUCTIONS.
4" 2x4 TREES TO BE CLEANED AND WRAPPED IN GEOTEXTILE FILTER FABRIC. 1/2" GUTTER TO BE INSTALLED TO DRAIN DOWN.
SLOPE TO DRAIN: 1/4" PER FOOT.
SLOPE TO DRAIN: 1/4" PER FOOT.
SLOPE TO DRAIN: 1/4" PER FOOT.
SLOPE TO DRAIN: 1/4" PER FOOT.

BNPD
DRAWN: SCALE: AS INDICATED
CHECKED: DATE: 4 FEB 2023
DRAWING NO.:
B102
JOB NUMBER: 2010

Sky Light
Anyone can order a skylight from a catalogue. Why not build one yourself? Why not build the windows yourself? The Trusses? The paneling? The ornamentation?

But if you did all of that you would be making architecture, and heaven forbid you did that!

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Skylight
Location
Christiansburg, VA
Year
2024-2025



Penthouse Suite

The top floor is the only one clear from side to side. It is open, spacious, and pure. It has two little eyes that peer at you!

Rich Color

The sides and rear of the house are clad in BC grade plywood, stained white. It has a rich color and grain texture, giving the facade multiple scales of legibility -From far away as an abstract composition, and close up as a material palette.

Bulldozer

The front facade screen, which is like the blade of a bulldozer, is made of cement board panels (pictured above).

We may build our kingdoms on earth in the image of Heaven;

but only as long as nature permits.

STRADDLING RIDGELINED BENCH PROVINCIALITIES"

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Main Street View

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2025

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Rear Elevation

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2022



Planeix

Along with the Villa Stein, one of the most elemental and therefore potent facade compositions in library of Corbusien residences.



Wide Front

A wide front requires a shallow plan. The effect of this squishing and elongating is one of grandiosity; overpowering, fearless, peerless posturing -why not, life is so so short.



Project / Title
Trevi Fountain

Author
Giuseppe Pannini

Location
Rome, IT

Year
1762

Project / Title
John Lemley Ln,
Construction

Location
Christiansburg, VA

Year
2022

Project / Title
Villa Aldobrandini

Author
Giacomo Della Porta

Location
Froscati, IT

Year
1598



1011 2nd st. was a large, multi-phase residential renovation in Brookings, South Dakota. The main floors remained largely in keeping with the character of the original home (pictured below); but the attic story, both on the interior and exterior possessed a more personal aesthetic. The interior is minimalistic, white, unadorned. In the middle of the space is a severe, maybe even gaunt, truss form that stretches down to the floor -making it look person-like. The exterior is also person-like, but it is loud and bombastic -almost Gehryesq if it weren't for its classical sense of symmetry and hierarchy.

A piece of sales-copy: "We live near the lush, rolling waves of

wheat and alfalfa, the pale sea of American farmland, surely no more than a stones' throw from the Black Mountain Hills of South Dakota. And we are building our house (a beautiful 3 story 1910 Colonial) into a semi-traditional Japanese Onsen.

We will call it the Kimono House, and it's outsides will flow like a whirling mass of white linen, tufting about like the gentle clouds of steam which will bellow upwards from the soothing waters.

We will need rocks and moss and tiny trees and very pink flowers and fountains which trickle just so, chug chug chug. And we will enclose those things in a private, sky lit courtyard so that only our privileged guests may

The Actual Situation

I was envious of my sister who had recently bought a house, so I asked my mom for twenty-five thousand dollars cash, and put fifteen percent down on a fixer-upper in South Dakota, my then place of residence. I figured for another twenty or thirty thousand, of my own money, I could renovate the ground floor kitchen and living space, add a basement apartment, and convert the attic into a master suite.

The Plan

In order to accomplish all of this for such a preposterously low sum, I boldly endeavored to build everything myself with the help of two fellows: an out of work handyman-type, shortly thereafter arrested and remanded on drug charges; and a twenty-one-year-old architecture student, intelligent and very capable. I figured that if I completed my renovation without any glaring defects, I would more than likely get all of my money back and hopefully a little extra when I went to sell it.

To my great satisfaction that is precisely what happened.



enjoy these spoils. We will need wood and concrete and steel and sheets of rice paper with just enough transparency for their lightness. And we will assemble those things with architectural precision, so that even a metropolitan sculptor, an artisan, contrived to spend a cozy evening among us humble country folk, may pause to admire its beautifully voluptuous play of light and shadow.

Consider decorative motifs which must flow along otherwise blank stucco walls like silk-patterned embroidery; consider the redwood planking which must open effortlessly into the boiling hot pools, mounted flush; consider the wood burning stove which must crackle bits of cedar and sage, evaporating fragrant oils like cypress and eucalyptus. We will open our doors to the wayward travelers, to the erotic couplers, to the bed and breakers, to the 5-bedroomed Victorian roads of Kansas.

Inside The Kimono House, we will dine together, all of us, with tremendous mirth and serenity, cross-legged and bare-footed on tatami mats like fields of grain."



Good Neighbor
The Kimono House is a good neighbor. It sends love like a bullet from a gun, brother; straight from its heart.

HOW OR HOW DID THIS GET HERE, I WONDER.

"EXPLOSIVELY PROFITABLE NEWSWORTHY TAIL WHIP HOUSE

FLIP"

"1011 2ND ST"

Project / Title
1011 2nd St,
Interior Renovations

Location
Brookings, SD

Year
2021



Project / Title
1011 2nd St,
Rear Elevation Views

Location
Brookings, SD

Year
2021



“WEIGHTLESS MASTHEAD

Secret Dormer Room
The dormer, rather than a recessive hunched over mass, barely protruding from the roofline, instead explodes up and out creating a central head-like volume -much like the cock pit of a warship!

Pinocchio
The truss reaches down to the floor, and becomes a body. It is the ghost in the machine.
It has arms with hands.

POINTS

The righteous path toward the holy grail, the realization of a true urban work of permanent importance, the life and death dictatorial touch of infinite capital and public spectacle, the crowning ornamentation of those most important historical episodes. Such is the path we crave!

It's back breaking. It's crooked. It's leaking. It's ugly. It is forever a contingency. It is anything but a drawing.

I do not relish working with my hands; it seems at times that everything is held with packaging tape, and rotting away. The corporeal plane is merciless and unforgiving. And yet, we must persevere, through the swamp. We are here to perform those physical duties in this dimension, and our ultimate feelings or judgments of the thing are of no consequence.

Why? Because architecture stands for something far greater than the glory or comfort of its maker. It is here for the edification of a people or a places or a movement in time:

Enlightenment!
Electricity!
Political Revolution!

And what about the raising of a child? Or the creation of a family unit? Or kindred bonds of friendship and fellowship?

What better building than a home to erect in service of these things?



PINOCCHIO-ED TRUSS

OUTER SPACE“



The Stranger
The final act in the film culminates with a horrifying ascent up whisker-thin ladders through a tiny little hole.

Something sublime, religious about the spatial gesture.

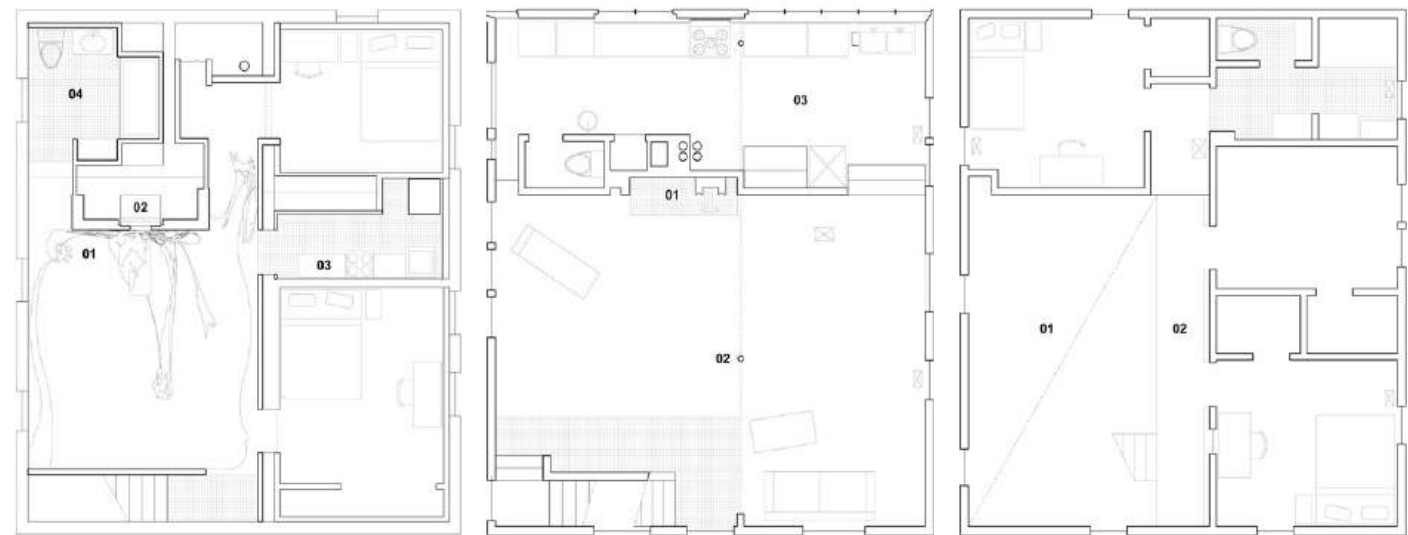


Project / Title
The Stranger
Artist
Orsen Welles
Medium
Film
Year
1946



Project / Title
Villa Dakota, Secret Dormer Room
Location
Brookings, SD
Medium
Wood, Corrugated Metal, Steel
Year
2021

Project / Title
Villa Dakota, Attic Playroom
Location
Brookings, SD
Medium
Wood, Corrugated Metal, Steel
Year
2021



Basement Addition (Samson's Lair -built)
 Ceiling Sculpture A01
 Wood Stove A02
 Apt Bath A03
 Apt Kitchen A04

Main Floor (unrealized)
 Fireplace B01
 Open Living / Dining B02
 "Commercial" Kitchen B03

Second Floor (unrealized)
 Open to Below C01
 Open Steel Walkway C02

The project timeline was at first non-existent, so we began with many over-the-top design iterations - most of which became only speculations. We roughly imagined three years worth of work, but remained for only one. Ideas, therefore, were radically shrunk or deleted altogether.

Melting Ceiling
 The ceiling in the living room (below) would give way under the weight of -something- revealing a frothing, cavernous volume of light above.

Though we did not build this exact space, we attempted a simpler version in the basement apartment (plan above, pictures in the following spreads).

We began firstly with the main floor and kitchen, thinking we could delete one of the upper bedrooms and create a sculptural skylight-ceiling (plans above, rendering below). We next looked at many organic-pseudo-parametricized versions of the main elevation (drawing below).

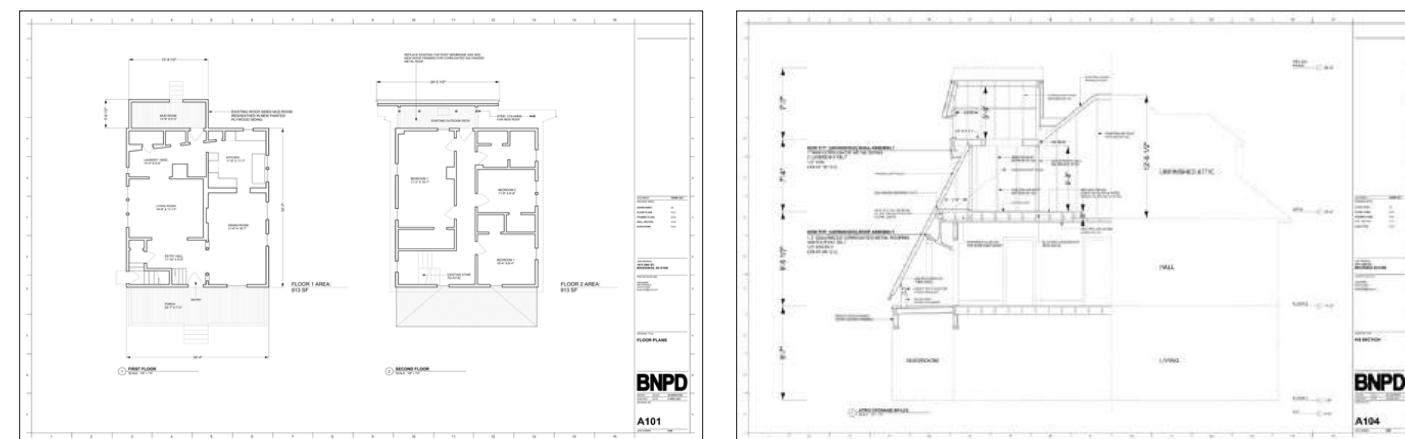
Four Square Plan
 The tight four square plan (plan above) is rearranged into a more modern, spacious, Japanese-style plan -with a grand living space in the front, and compact utilities in the rear.

New Spaciousness
 We imagined a long narrow kitchen in the rear (pictured in the small rendering to the right), a compact row of bedrooms on the second floor and an open space with a large hearth (pictured to the left).

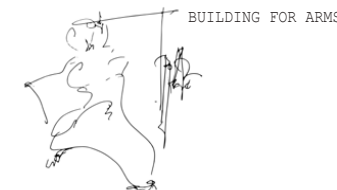
...unbuilt.

When it came time to build, however, we decided the most economically sensible thing was to add usable square footage.

We lightly renovated the existing kitchen, living, and laundry rooms, but then converted an unfinished basement into an autonomous apartment unit. Lastly we converted an unfinished attic story into a master bed + bath suite (shown in the previous spread).



"FANTASIES VOLUPTUOUS



Kimono Roofline
 The simple pyramidal roofline (shown above) remains, but in this early elevation drawing (shown below left) the shapes instead cascade down into a wind-swept field of movable lines and contours.

Zaha
 On top of Zaha's usual slivers and undulations, I imagined angels and devils and men and women and all sorts of other things dancing along the surface of the building, tearing it to pieces, and rebuilding it anew.

Sculptural figures nestled within the work seem to be provoking the scene.

Pragmatics
 The drawings above show pages from the stripped-down construction set for permits. The main floor plan shows the modified kitchen-utility area, designed to house all of the necessities in one diagonal wall of poche.

The section above also shows the new canted roofline added to the existing simple hip-roof.

The existing dormer on the right is also imitated, enlarged and elevated in the new dormer on the right. It is more head-like now.

MOST REAL

AND

"UNREAL"



Project / Title
 1011 2nd St,
 Early Plans

Location
 Brookings, SD

Year
 2020

Project / Title
 Villa Dakota,
 Interior Renderings

Location
 Brookings, SD

Year
 2020

Project / Title
 Villa Dakota,
 Elevation Drawing

Location
 Brookings, SD

Medium
 Trace and Graphite

Year
 2020

Project / Title
 Villa Dakota,
 Roof Structure

Location
 Brookings, SD

Year
 2020

Project / Title
 Villa Dakota,
 Construction Set

Location
 Brookings, SD

Year
 2020

Samson's lair is a small basement renovation, with a decorative fireplace serving as the main focus of the space. Who is Samson:

"In a bloody showdown, sublime in scale, Samson brought down the walls which held him in bondage; annihilating both himself, the captive, and his captors. It is a matter of style; courage and

strength, in the face of total dread; spirit transcending matter, and by relation, all logic as well. Some see the whole world as a merciless game of chance; and man, an orphaned soul. They see him postpone his inevitable end by fixing himself into a building. This is his shelter, but it is also his cage... A cage made from scratch, and sometimes

the other way; below ground, and sometimes above. He garrisons himself, and occasionally a small party of related individuals, a family, taking comfort in his fortifications which he sees are strong and good. And yet..."

(Continues...)

Block Printing

The most iconic facet of Beardsley's style, the ultra-simple play of black and white space (pictured in the drawing to the right), seems to have emerged as if by accident.

Translation to Steel

The constraints of block printing and publication necessitated a stripped down, modernist, pop-art like sensibility; which, for our purposes translates perfectly to the medium of laser cut steel against a plaster backdrop.



Japan

Japan is the sacred cow for minimalists. But look at its rich history of ornament. The works themselves are stripped down formally, but the subject matter is busy, dynamic, complex.

Art Nouveau

We see the origins of Art Nouveau, a wonderful time straddled between positively oppositional forces: economy, mass production, housing, a rising middle class.



Beardsley

The work is a Japanese block print set against a European backdrop of drapery and cornice moulding. It is punchy, volitive, sexy.

“HAND-DRAWN

“SAMSON LAIR”

PROJECTION CAD-MAPPING

STEEL-CUT

“HELL-RAISED CHILD”



Project / Title
Marshall's Basement, Existing
Location
Brookings, SD
Medium
Steel, Plaster
Year
2020

Project / Title
Marshall's Basement, Kitchen and Bath
Location
Brookings, SD
Medium
Steel, Plaster
Year
2020



Project / Title
Fujin and Raijin-zu
Author
Ogata Korin
Medium
Ink and gold foiled paper
Year
18 Century Edo Period

Project / Title
Peacock Skirt, Salome
Author
Aubrey Beardsley
Medium
Ink
Year
1892



Specialists

Architects leave too much to the cladding fabricators, the curtain wall subcontractors. They become samplers of good taste, knowing which panel product and lighting package is most desirable.

Instead they should be inventors on the frontier of new problems that need solving.

Seed

Perhaps some advancement occurs, but all too often the critical decision making is left in the hands of specialists, a prophylactic stop gap between the seed of invention and the vision of the god

Construction

Pictures below show the process of bending, folding, and welding the laser-cut steel into the final ornamental pieces.

“And Yet man, who is like the mortal Samson, tires of this ultimately self imposed defensive struggle. He longs for escape, whatever the cost; to loosen his grip on earthly matters, and as the winds which wind and curl from Heaven knows where, **so too**

does his spirit wish to be carried off to some other galaxy which is not as heavy and burdensome as this one surely is.

And so he is free at last.”



“PLASTIC FORM

ORNAMENTED SURFACE“



SCREAM

Project / Title
Marshall's Basment,
Close Ups

Location
Brookings, SD

Medium
Steel, Plaster

Year
2020

Project / Title
Marshall's Basment,
Construction

Location
Brookings, SD

Medium
Steel, Plaster

Year
2020

Project / Title
Marshall's Basment,
Sketch

Location
Brookings, SD

Medium
Pencil, Trace

Year
2020

Project / Title
Marshall's Basment

Location
Brookings, SD

Medium
Steel, Plaster

Year
2020

Ex-Embryon is an "Egg Chair" based on the original design by Arne Jacobsen of the same name. The original shape appears melted, morphed as though it were sprouting tiny legs and wings and arms. The Jacobsen chair, though very comfortable, presents itself as a sculptural object, skewed by a separate pedestal-like base; the Ex-Embryon chair on the other hand is imagined as a living entity, complete and total. **The project is as much a functional chair, as it is a meditation on tectonics in a more broadly applicable sense.**

Stiffness

In order to resolve the tectonic mishap between frame and skin, the offset shell of EX-EMBRYON (or C-1000, or just Egg Chair 2) is visually detached from its steel skeleton.

Folding and bending generate stiffness through corrugation: the shell supports its shape, the frame supports the object in space.

False Joints

Structurally, the punctured holes in the fiberglass are strengthened by extruding perpendicular nodes along the steel appendages (creating stiffness through folding).

Aesthetically, the extruded nodes create a second "false joint" where both systems recognize the existence of the other, but disguise the real connection (bolted hardware, rubber gasket) within the form itself.

On joints in general: A classicist sees the finished surface in a work of architecture as a tectonic interplay between decorative and structural objects: when a classical column comes in contact with an adjoining beam, the flowing lines of its decorous capital visually perform like knee cartilage, softening the otherwise blunted intersection of two or more oppositional components.

See that Zaha Hadid adds moulding (or decoration) to her tensile structure to "soften" an otherwise awkward, blunt tectonic moment between the fabric (which is an exterior applique) and the actual waterproofed building underneath (clumsily represented by the Denver Airport).

Zaha's pavilion uses completely ordinary principles of tensile architecture; but what distinguishes her project in a radically new way is the insertion of the fiberglass moulding, which acts like a visual gasket between the fabric, the steel, and in this case also quite cleverly, the extruded glass curtain wall.

It's quite obvious she was not shy about revealing the material discontinuity between both hard and soft systems (as one is completely matte while the other is high gloss), but nevertheless the overall reading is unequivocally one of wholeness.

"EX-EMBRYO"

"SURFBOARD BALI WAVES OCEAN STEAM

BREEZE ARMATURE"



The Structure
The Denver airport is a structural success and an architectural failure. It is as if the roof sprung a leak, and several handymen were paid to install temporary tarping. The work resists wholeness and a sense of totality, oration.

The Architecture
Zaha's pavilion is the exact opposite. It is perfection. Total synthesis of structure and decoration.



Project / Title
C-1000

Medium
Milled Foam and Fiberglass Gel Coat, Welded Steel

Year
2014

Project / Title
Denver International Airport

Location
Denver, CO

Author
Fentress Bradburn Architects

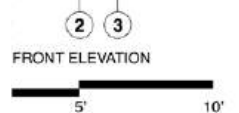
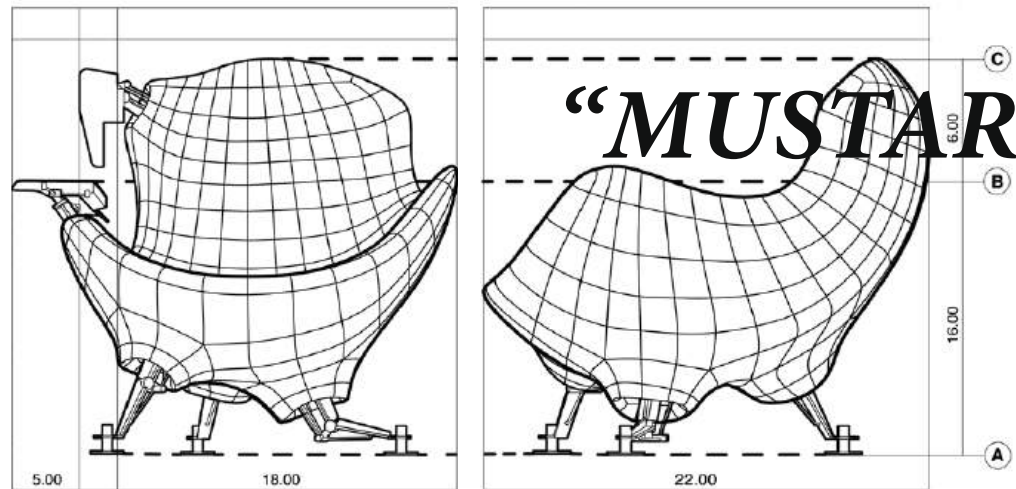
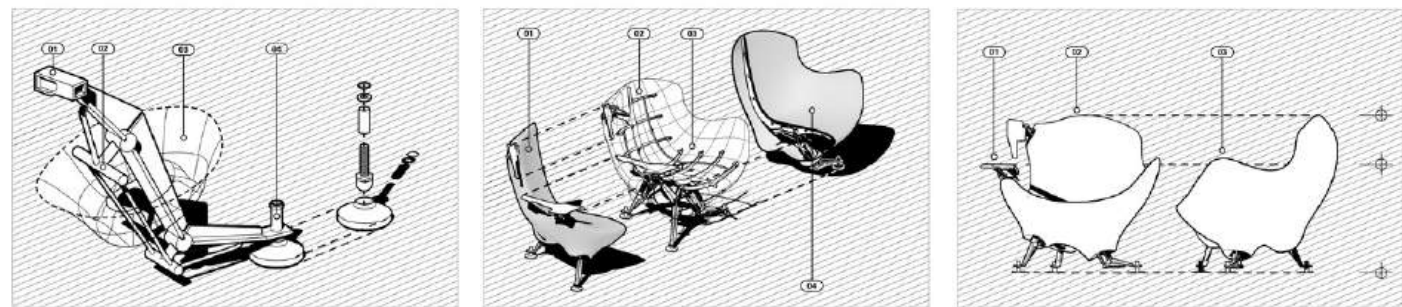
Year
1995

Project / Title
Serpentine Sackler Gallery

Location
London, EN

Author
Zaha Hadid Architects

Year
2013



“MUSTARD SEEDLINGS

MID-CAREER CRISIS OASIS”

Armatures

The voluptuous arm-rest is replaced by a folded steel shard that is cold to the touch. As such, Ex-Embryon is more than a performative object (a chair); it is a theatrical centerpiece, a sculptural artifact in its own right, designed to reflect the architecture of today and even tomorrow.

Gaudi's Joints

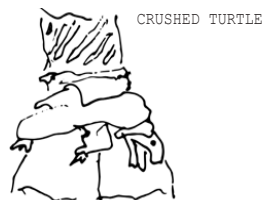
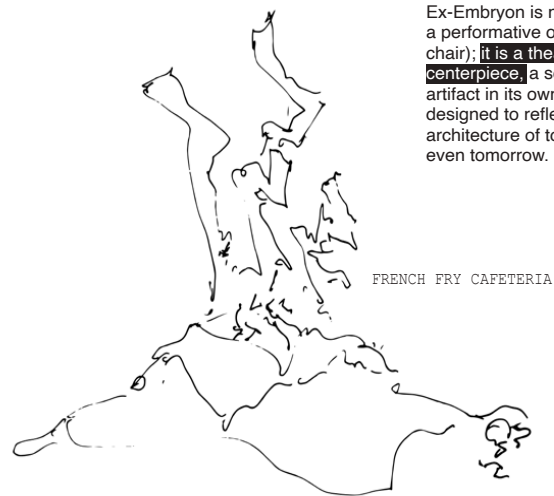
Look at the way Gaudi's handrails contact the structural column, how the railing is attached to the vertical posts -it is the famous organic effect, as though individual components were all living entities with their own consciousness.

Look at how the roof meets the skyline!

- Ball Joint Connection A01
- Steel Tensile Support A02
- Fiberglass Disguise Joint A03
- Self Leveling Pivot Foot A04

- Fiberglass Shell LT B01
- Main Steel Spine B02
- Main Steel Ribs B03
- Fiberglass Shell RT B04

- LT Mechanical Handrest C01
- Main Shell C02
- RT Organic Handrest C03

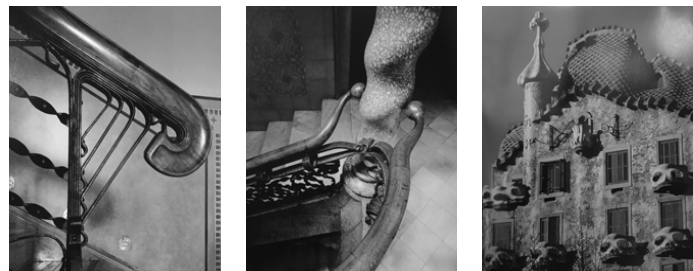


Project / Title
Casa Batlo

Location
Barcelona, SP

Author
Antoni Gaudi

Year
1877

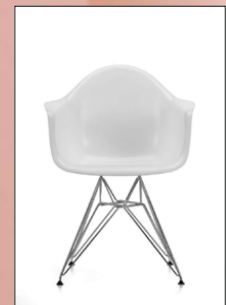


Project / Title
C-1000

Medium
Milled Foam and Fiberglass Gel Coat, Welded Steel

Year
2014

“FREAK-CORB EGG RESORBSTION



Charles and Ray
The fiberglass line of Eames' Chairs marked yet another modernist revolution, as clearly delineated materiality establishes oppositional formal tectonics.



Arne Jacobsen's Egg chair is presumed to be the last of this modernist lineage. The organic supple togology imitates human form with perhaps the highest degree of virtuoso. Its failure as sculptural object pertains to the unintentional relationship between the harsh support structure and the fragile egg itself.



Corb
A chair is a machine for sitting. A clear separation between frame and skin recognizes both the functional and the pleasurable.

Project / Title
DAW Dining Arm Chair

Author
Charles and Ray Eames

Medium
Fiberglass, Bent Aluminum

Year
1949

Project / Title
Egg Chair

Author
Arne Jacobsen

Medium
Leather Cover, Steel Frame

Year
1958

Project / Title
LC4

Author
Le Corbusier and Charlotte Perriand

Medium
Leather Cover, Steel Frame

Year
1929



MOST ASTOUNDING”



Project / Title
Woman in tub

Medium
Porcelain

Author
Jeff Koons

Year
1988

Project / Title
C-1000 Film Still Onlook

Medium
Milled Foam and Fiberglass Gel Coat, Welded Steel

Year
2014

Project / Title
Ex-Embryon

Medium
Milled Foam and Fiberglass Gel Coat, Welded Steel

Year
2014

The Streetlight was an un-built project for a competition to redesign the streetlights (what else?) for all of downtown Los Angeles. We, my collaborator (Juan Robledo) and I, took it as a chance to make something that was both symbolic and functional. Here is a snippet from our introductory write up:

“AWAKE!

LA, a city of angels;

We hear them cry out, “Hope!” “Hope for our mothers and fathers; our children and grandchildren. Hope for this greenish-blue planet. Hope for that lead role in May. Hope for those who’ve been kept down just too damn long.”

THE ANGELS



ARE

Dolphin Lamp Standard
The street lamps in London, a seafaring city, are decorated at the base with two writhing dolphins. They are beautiful. They are memorable.

Without imitating a 19th century style, we aim to resurrect this decorative attitude.

CALLING US!”

“STREETLIGHT”

-COLLABORATION W/ JUAN ROBLEDO

Project / Title
LA Streetlight, Main Rendering, Collab

Location
Los Angeles, CA

Medium
Rendering

Year
2020

Project / Title
Dolphin Lamp Standard

Author
John Vulliamy

Location
London, EN

Year
1860

For indeed a city of angels is also a city of dreamers; dreamers who thrive on hope, however naive and slim and blurry and dashing, as if it were sometimes the only true sustenance.

“So let us make something,” they say, “that the people of Los Angeles will believe in as much as their cinema, as much as their strips, as much as their glamorous images of bright sunsets and shiny, sparkly sequins-decor.”

Even the sterilizing force of European Modernism reached the California coastline and exploded into an eccentric burst of creativity, freedom, and self expression: The Ding-batters, the Wrighters, the Lautner’s. But go back even further, to that eclectic mixture of polychromatic Art Deco and Art Nouveau: touching everything from late-night donut diners to New Deal Postal Depots. We saw in those things a diverse reflection of what we are, and a specter of who we might become.

Culture, that is: its people, its lingo, its art and architecture; are forever changing. Qualities, however, such as strength, courage, boldness, glory and joy are timeless virtues. We must reconstruct the civic image of our city, but let us firstly do so in spirit: a collective spirit of ascension, a collective spirit of hope!

The streetlight will be a darkened silhouette of flowing

Assembly
The base of the pole consists of a typical concrete footing which provides the foundation with cast-in-place bolts onto which the steel pole mounts.

curves, of abstract vitality: all of it suggestively jostling about like a Gehry building, or a Pollock painting. But the streetlight will also be a hazy or perhaps even very vivid portrait of an angel, or a cluster of angels: hurtling upward toward the sky with the figural depth and detail of a Francis Bacon painting or a Gerhard Richter photograph.

(Continues...)

Assembly (cont.)
This is to be a standard connection which is utilized in conventional street poles. A “beauty cap” manufactured by stamping metal wraps around the base, visually grounding it and producing a sculptural element.



Koons
A Jeff Koons piece is a gorgeous object, but it is also punchy and unpretentious. It is as pristine as a Brancuzi, without the heavy weight of its symbolic ambiguity.

It has a wide appeal and acceptance among popular culture, and so its place in public art is justified and appropriate.

Neo Pop Art
The Lamp of Los Angeles demonstrates a neo pop art sensibility.

Like a monochromatic, chrome polished Koons, we propose something which is familiar and appealing to a general audience, while at the same time innovative in terms of material specificity and abstract form.

It is both a winged cluster of angels rising toward the stratosphere, dangling behind them loose fitting classical drapery; AND it is a whirling, effervescent, black mass exploding inwards and outwards!



Project / Title
Ballon Flower, Purple

Artist
Jeff Koons

Medium
Chrome Steel

Year
1993

Project / Title
Ballon Flower, Red

Artist
Jeff Koons

Medium
Chrome Steel

Year
1993

Project / Title
LA Streetlight, Street Scenes, Collab

Location
Los Angeles, CA

Medium
Rendering

Year
2020



Ponte Sant' Angelo
The Ancient Roman Bridge adorned with Baroque statues of Angels and Saints. The statues are a series. It is not about the celebration of the one, but "the many."

In mass, numbers, solidarity, they guide and protect the city and its people.

Public Art
There will be many ceremonious moments in which the lamp, understood as both light and sculpture, will elevate and ennoble those already beautiful monuments of public infrastructure.

BAM!
Core tenets of movement, fragility etc. are directly represented through Bernini's human figures. But look closely! for classical virtuoso requires very careful attention.

In contrast, we appreciate Gehry's work for its immediacy. BAM! The image permanently burned into memory without you even trying. Arguably this is abstract art's greatest asset.

Needless to say, the Lamp of Los Angeles should operate at both scales: an ornate piece of figurative sculpture; and an immediate gesture of industrial elegance.

No smog



SUPREME
Pop art, pop culture has re-embraced classical figurines and sculpture. The red logo "Supreme" renders the piece unquestionably contemporary, self-aware, and un-kitsch.

Our lamp is a somewhat classical representation of angelic creatures ascending toward the sky, but the figures themselves become blurred and abstracted as they morph into sleek curvaceous shapes.

Monumentality
Early Art Deco works have a robust, Egyptian quality: large, unadorned planes; low-relief carvings, and a monochromatic stone veneer to harmonize the whole.

The lamp resonates with these ideals: complexity is paired with simplicity, heaviness paired with lightness, and all constitutive parts are rendered from the same glossy black metal or plastic.

"EL DESPERTAR INFINITO DE

NUESTRO PUEBLO DE ANGELES"

They fly away, toward the unmapped, unknown charters of discovery, dangling behind them their robes and drapery, so that we might pull them tightly to us and fly away with them. "Be not afraid! Gaze at your vast city," they'll say. "And see that you are not alone, for we are with you!"

We will meet the demands of economy; we will illuminate our streets and sidewalks; we will use recycled plastics in complex sculptural forms; we will use lightweight stamped metal along the base and shaft; we will

integrate EV charging stations and programmable LED light displays. But we will also deliver a bold provocative gesture for a new streetscape: imagine London without red phone booths, Paris without its subway stations... LA without its floating Angels... A shout from a mountain top, a cheer from the resistance! Perhaps we can create such a force; to empower and inspire, right here, where we call home:

A land of mambas, a land of movie stars, a land of migrants; all of them so very beautiful in their radiance.

Yes.
Perhaps we can shine at least a very small light unto this very dark night."

Project / Title
Ponte St. Angelo

Author
Gian Lorenzo, Bernini

Location
Rome, IT

Year
1535



Project / Title
Disney Concert Hall

Author
Frank Gehry

Location
Los Angeles, CA

Year
2003

Project / Title
LA Streetlight, Collab

Location
Los Angeles, CA

Medium
Rendering

Year
2020

Project / Title
Meissen Hand Painted Cupid Figurine

Author
Supreme

Year
2019

The Shinto Shed was a very simple addition to a small weekend cabin located near Mt. Shasta in Northern California. The basic box is made of stained lumber, while the enormous roof truss is made of welded steel, and once again, ornamental laser cut componentry. It represents the first complete work of mine realized as an "Independent Architect," structure and all. To find out what that is exactly, read on:

Today's young architects must play by different rules in order

A fish?
The figures in the roof gable are meant to evoke the critters and trees and the people and the fish found in Shasta County.

to find a proper outlet for their creative works. Mass produced housing has almost completely eliminated the middle class patron willing to take a chance on experimental homes or vacation residences; and meaningful civic projects, hitherto publicized via open competitions, have been replaced by private commissions between market-driven developers and already well established, "blue chip" firms. In contrast to many of my peers who have willfully retreated into a world of Digital-Paper-Architecture (it

would seem, as a form of resistance to the present circumstances); I advocate for the exact opposite, which is a return to the architect-as-builder model.

Just like independent filmmakers and musicians, who must learn to execute those more banal aspects of their industry for the sake of economy (not only recording and producing, but also things like distributing, financing, marketing etc); the "Independent Architect" as I call it, must learn to build houses, to buy houses, to flip houses, to buy land, to scrape together what money they can, roll up their sleeves as it were, and basically do it themselves.

Nobody "gave" David Lynch or Stanley Kubrick their first films. They saved their money slowly over time, rented equipment, hired friends and rag-tag crews, learned on the fly, and simply made a film.

We can do the same! And yet we are presently in a state of repression. Those of us with eye for the future may choose to go into hiding - lest our worthy efforts be plucked out of their sockets with rusty spoons, bought and then sold, or ultimately killed in the crib!

Until the cities have consumed themselves fully, and until there is no one left to thwart our inevitable intervention, we will wait; fiddling away with these more humble projects in our basements, in our driveways, in our backwoods and trailer parks.

For there is presently little to no alternative!

(The Shinto Shed was a self-funded, Independent Work of Architecture. It was built for the staggering low sum of only thirty-five hundred dollars. Some might prefer to travel to Paris with that kind of money, I prefer to erect a city of my own!)

"IT IS
HUT-SAN
SHINTO SHED!"

"SHINTO SHED"

-COLLABORATION
W/ JUAN ROBLEDO



Project / Title
Mt. Shasta Fishing Hut, Wood Frame

Location
Mt Shasta, CA

Medium
Trace and Graphite

Year
2020

Project / Title
Mt. Shasta Fishing Hut, Steel Frame

Location
Mt Shasta, CA

Medium
Trace and Graphite

Year
2020

Project / Title
Mt. Shasta Fishing Hut, Early Study

Location
Mt Shasta, CA

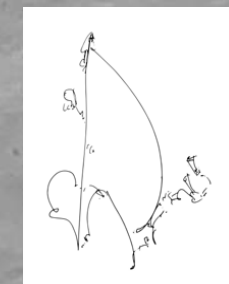
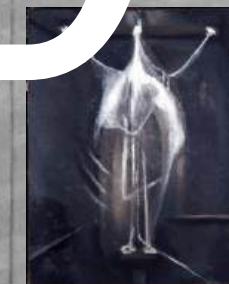
Medium
Trace and Graphite

Year
2020

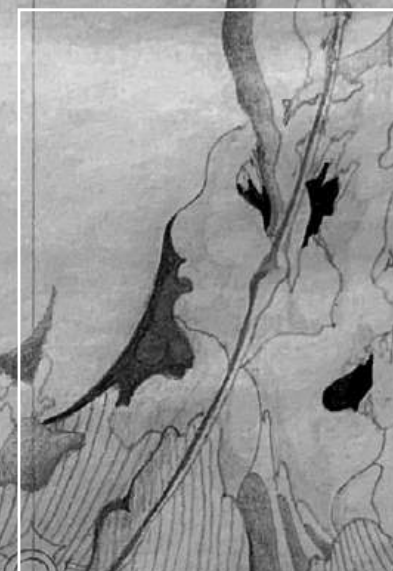
Francis Bacon
Admire the symmetrical structure of the crucifixion.

Fish
Gehry's fish laid to rest. A Divine sacrifice.

He who is without sin (for he is nearly brainless).



SMALL HEAD GUY



GEHRY'S TORTURED FISH



Decoration
The Shinto Shed roof was made of plasma cut welded steel. The doors were made of milled cedar plank laminated together.

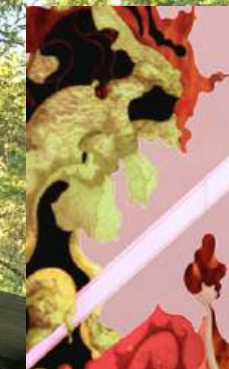


"Lemme just say,
it looked like...
their staplers,
their shoes,
their computer mouses,
their cameras,
their microwaves,
their air conditioners,
their printers,
their pencil sharpeners,
their vacuum cleaners,
their asthma inhalers,
their TV's,
their SUV's, DVD's and HTTP's,

their grad degrees,
their student fees,
their mouth disease,
But what about...
an ocean breeze?
Loud decrees?
afternoon XYZ's?
a robin,
a swallow,
a cockroach,
a nose,
an ear,
a tree,

a flower,
a pulse,
a life,
a soul, do they have one?
Surely yes,
they do."

"WITCH-BAT



Past Precedent
The Jade Valley project (pictured above and below) was a small public space of worship. There was to be a candle alter, along with several prayer mats and religious statuary.



Functional Sculpture
(Looking at the pinkish temple images above) we see a vaguely pagoda-like curved roof, overtaken by the sculptural figures on top which almost appear as if they could leap into the sky.

The decoration is deeply inspired by the temple forms of mainland China. They integrate sculpture and symbolism within conventional elements such as walls and roofs.

The space is a simple shelter, but it is also a symbolic piece of art for the citizens of Jade Valley.

This sadly unbuilt, semi-religious structure served as the basic blueprint for the Shinto Shed shown.

LOVE-DOCTOR HERMITAGE"



Project / Title
Jade Valley Temple, Unbuilt
Location
Jade Valley, CN
Medium
Steel, GFRC Panels
Year
2020

Project / Title
Shinto Shed, Collab
Location
Mt Shasta, CA
Medium
Steel, lumber, and painted plywood
Year
2020

The building on 5278 College Avenue (in Oakland, CA) was designed to retrofit an existing small office, and then infill the parking lot beside it. The program consisted of a cafe plus parking on the ground floor; two office suites on the second; and then five apartment units on the third, fourth, and fifth. The three-dimensional, programmatic distribution was highly compact and frankly clever. I attribute its greatness largely to my former collaborators, and therefore do not wish to capitalize on its merit. However, because it was clearly an urban party-wall building, we thought ultimately the facade should be the primary thematic focus in any case.

Like other designs provided in this work sample, it was planned to exemplify my very personal pseudo Art-Nouveau, organic mannerisms: lips, teeth, hands, angel wings, the angel of death, crawling children, a phoenix, a brain -all inscribed in rolled and punched relief across the main elevation.

The various facades of protruding bays peel away in plan like Boromini's San Carlino, but all of them in tandem with a single meta-gesture that moves diagonally and asymmetrically toward the heavens -where else?

Needless to say the "client" thought the facade appallingly useless and ugly. "And just like that," we decided to abruptly, and un-amicably, part ways.

A loss for the citizens of Oakland, for the discipline of architecture, for mankind in general...

The experience, however, left a useful impression on me, and to this day is one of the many motivating reasons why I have since shied away from (or, I suppose too, failed miserably to deliver) traditional architect-client based work.

How else can one maintain their creative independence?

Alas! Alas!

'Tis better to build small, but with total passion; than to build big, and surrender one's entire purpose.

Scaled Up Economy
Here the same strategy of sculptural relief is applied, but with a different economy of statement.

Slivers
What had been plastered over the entire facade of 210 Semple St (the next and last project presented), here reveals itself in much more detailed slivers, strewn about.

The majority of the surface would be simple stucco-clad volumes, with only the edges transformed into ornate, steel-cut and fiberglass figurens.



Infill
The existing building is wrapped in a new L shape with a 60' wide facade facing College Avenue. The building juts in and out, struggling to be both heavy and weightless.

Using Cranes
Our client proposal boldly suggested lifting and moving the existing building, the small rectangular mass pictured above in the "elbow" of our addition, to the rear corner of the lot.

The idea would have allowed for optimal use of the space because we could build under the old building (as opposed to above, which was a structural impossibility); as well as the opportunity to imagine a facade which spanned the entire length of the lot.

"BATTENED DOWN HURRICANE-

HATCHES "

"5278 COLLEGE"

-COLLABORATION
W/ JUAN ROBLED,
POAP PANUSITTIKORN

Project / Title
5278 College Avenue,
Collage Study

Location
Oakland, CA

Medium
Pencil on Trace

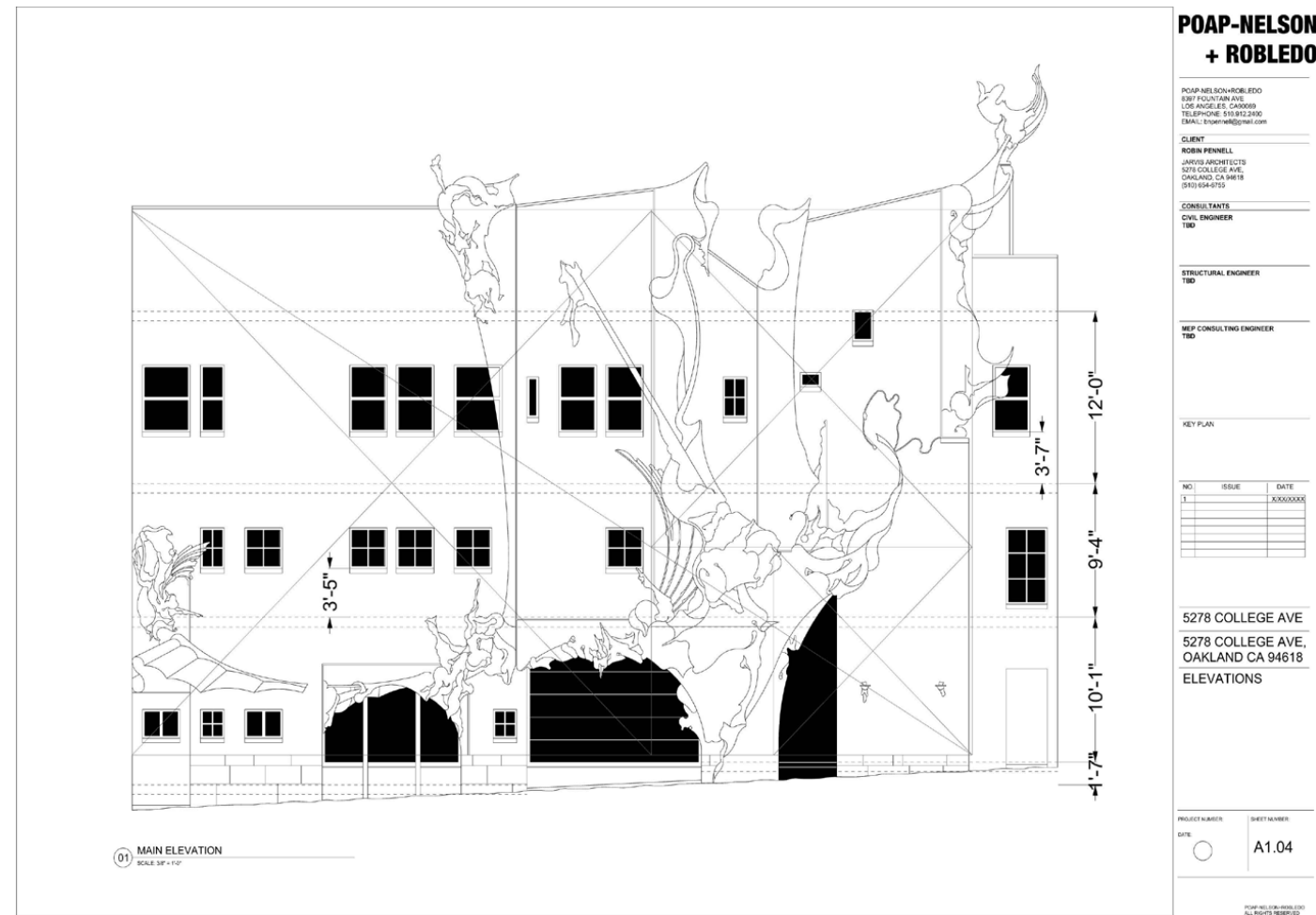
Year
2019

Project / Title
5278 College Avenue,
Aerial Views

Location
Oakland, CA

Medium
Digital Rendering

Year
2019

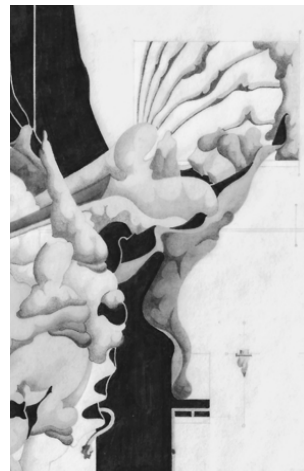


The Cutting Room Floor
The images below show an earlier iteration of the main facade. While high ornate and densely loaded with symbolism, the overall coherence of the form was almost completely absent.

Arches
The elevation above shows the final facade with three arches expanding in scale across the facade. The gesture is Venturi-esq, or mannerist, because as the arches grow they become incomplete fragments.

Golden Ratio
Despite the seemingly random composition of the work, the basic geometric shapes abide by the diminutive proportions of the golden ratio.

Its suggests that the project is being swept away, or preferably dissolving into thin air.



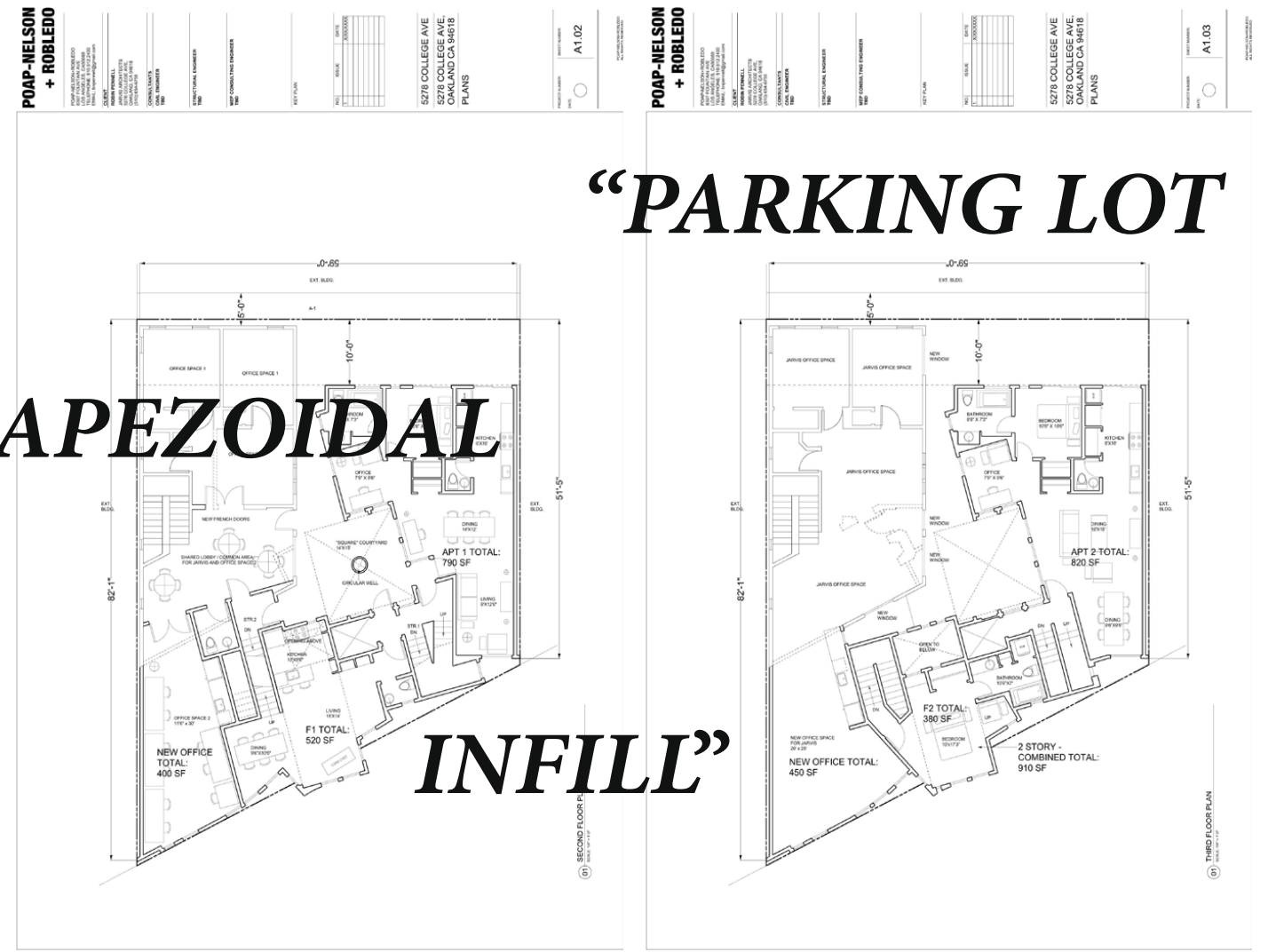
Former Collaborators
Poap-Nelson-Robledo was a brief partnership that lasted several months in 2020 -the duration of 5278 College Avenue, along with two other un-built urban infill projects.

Project / Title
5278 College Avenue,
Early facade studies

Location
Oakland, CA

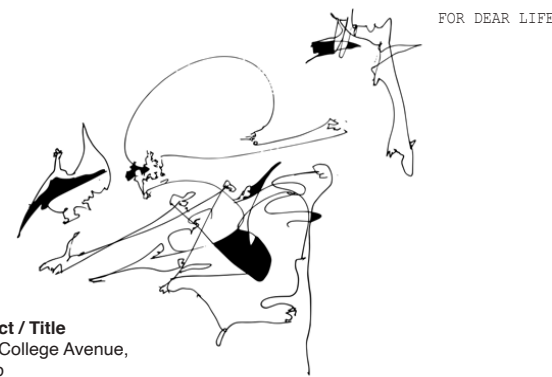
Medium
Pencil on Trace

Year
2020



Adaptive Re-use
The Plans above show an extremely awkward collage of shapes. The top left trapezoid is the existing building, and the L shape around it is the added infill.

Courtyard
In spite of the apparent incoherence of the plan, we tried to unify the entire ensemble around a perfect square courtyard, bringing light and air to the interior spaces.

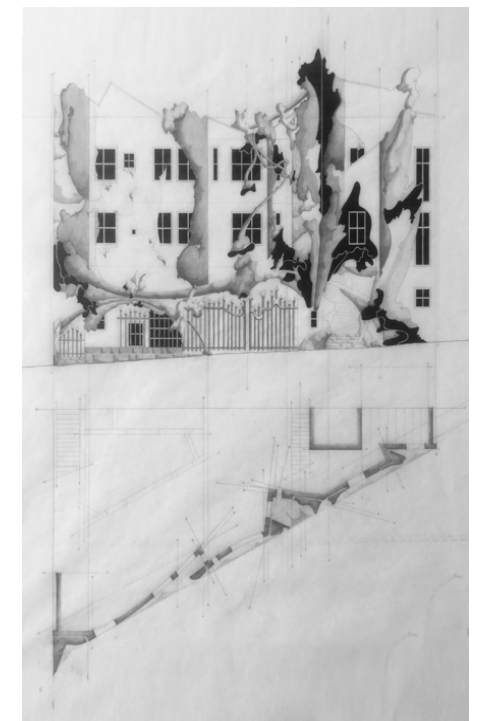


Project / Title
5278 College Avenue,
Collab

Location
Oakland, CA

Medium
CAD Sheet Exports

Year
2020



Project / Title
5278 College Avenue,
Early facade studies

Location
Oakland, CA

Medium
Pencil on Trace

Year
2020

A Poem:

Towered glories reached down from heavens high. And the soft ground it started to rise.

He felt squished. He felt anxious.

I believe I love you, he said.

Boy I sure hope it is true. Everything good was so easy.

Yield, he thought. It got a little brighter then.

He looked down and saw the earth.

And then he looked above and saw the sky. There was space enough between them.

He inhaled deep.

And drowned in a river's current.

"ANTARCTIC

WAVES OFFICE ROMANCE

Project / Title
5278 College Avenue, Collab
Location
Oakland, CA
Medium
Digital Rendering
Year
2019

PASSION STAVING"

Project / Title
5278 College Avenue, Early facade studies
Location
Oakland, CA
Medium
Pencil on Trace
Year
2019

Project / Title
The Cooper Union, Albert Nerken School of Engineering
Location
New York, NY
Author
Mophosis Architects
Year
2001



Objects in Stone
Michelangelo did not believe in the wholeness of buildings. Or rather, if he did, it was found in a purely orthographic sense. In others like Palladio, Hawksmoore, even Thom Mayne, complete statements are delivered urbanistically through elevation, nothing more.

Pure sculpture implies objects in the round, architecture implies objects embedded in flattened stone.



Project / Title
Porta Pia
Location
Rome, IT
Author
Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni
Year
1565





Haus Gables
Jennifer Bonner's "Haus Gables" is both a study in form making, as well as new possibilities in construction.

In a Venturi-esq fashion, it takes the traditional gable form, but digitalizes it, booleans it, and makes it into something wholly different.

"PEELING WEATHERED HANDMADE

"210 SEMPLE"



WEEKEND



WARRIOR"

Project / Title
Haus Gables
Location
Atlanta, GA
Author
Jennifer Bonner
Year
2018

Project / Title
Villa Stein-de Monzie
Location
Garches, FR
Author
Le Corbusier
Year
1927

Project / Title
Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio
Location
Oak Park, IL
Author
Frank Lloyd Wright
Year
1909

Project / Title
210 Semple St.,
Construction Process
Location
Modesto, CA
Medium
Plywood and Fiberglass,
Typ. Stucco Construction
Year
2018

Project / Title
Squished Housing
Medium
Sketch, Graphite and
Trace Paper
Year
2016

A Hybrid House
Set aside every other conceptual ambition, 210 Semple St. had one goal in mind: To combine the two greatest houses ever built into one: of course the Villa Stein and the Oak Park Studio.

Because both building types radically oppose one another in terms of organization and general shape, the only solution was to flatten them -resulting in a thin sculptural relief which (at least) vaguely resembles the new hybridized pair.

House Rhetoric
210 Semple st. recognizes the turn of Post-Digital architecture. It mercilessly steals from its parametric counterparts only to re-deploy these efforts in an explicitly recognizable, canonic manner. It responds to the potentialized field of physical forces, and so it stumbles and falls and re-stabilizes itself. It responds to the Post-Modern call for rhetoric, and so its presents these maneuvers as a visible contrivance -sculpturally powerful and aesthetically seductive all the same.

210 Semple St. was my first architectural commission: A duplex in rural Modesto, CA. The budget had a hard limit of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and the client, rather eccentrically, required a footprint of eight hundred and eighty eight square feet. Beyond that, miraculously, I could do whatever the hell!

Initial designs looked synchronistically similar to Jennifer Bonner's very three-dimensionalized "Haus Gables," then unbuilt and even unpublished. Structur-

Walls First
Ideas concerning the wall and its significance as an autonomous agent of design have been written about extensively, see:

Holder, Andrew. "On Sufficient Density." Log, 2016.

Classical Severity
The general ethos of Corbu's modernism: mathematically governed plan and elevation, minimal ornament and decor, maximum daylight penetration, and economical space planning. IE a box is easier / faster / more industrious, therefore ideal.

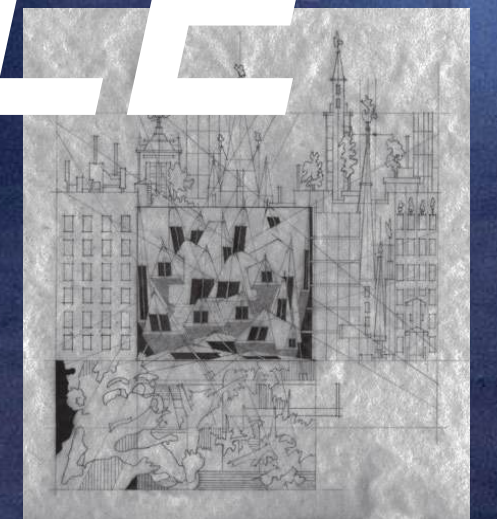
ally, as she proved however, a shape of that complexity would have required an incredibly unique solution, which I rightly assumed was well beyond my modest budget. I therefore elected to squish the initial massing model into an almost paper-thin facade of bas-relief (at it thickest point approximately 29" in depth). The finished work portrays three "house-forms" intertwined; wrestling, humping, posing.

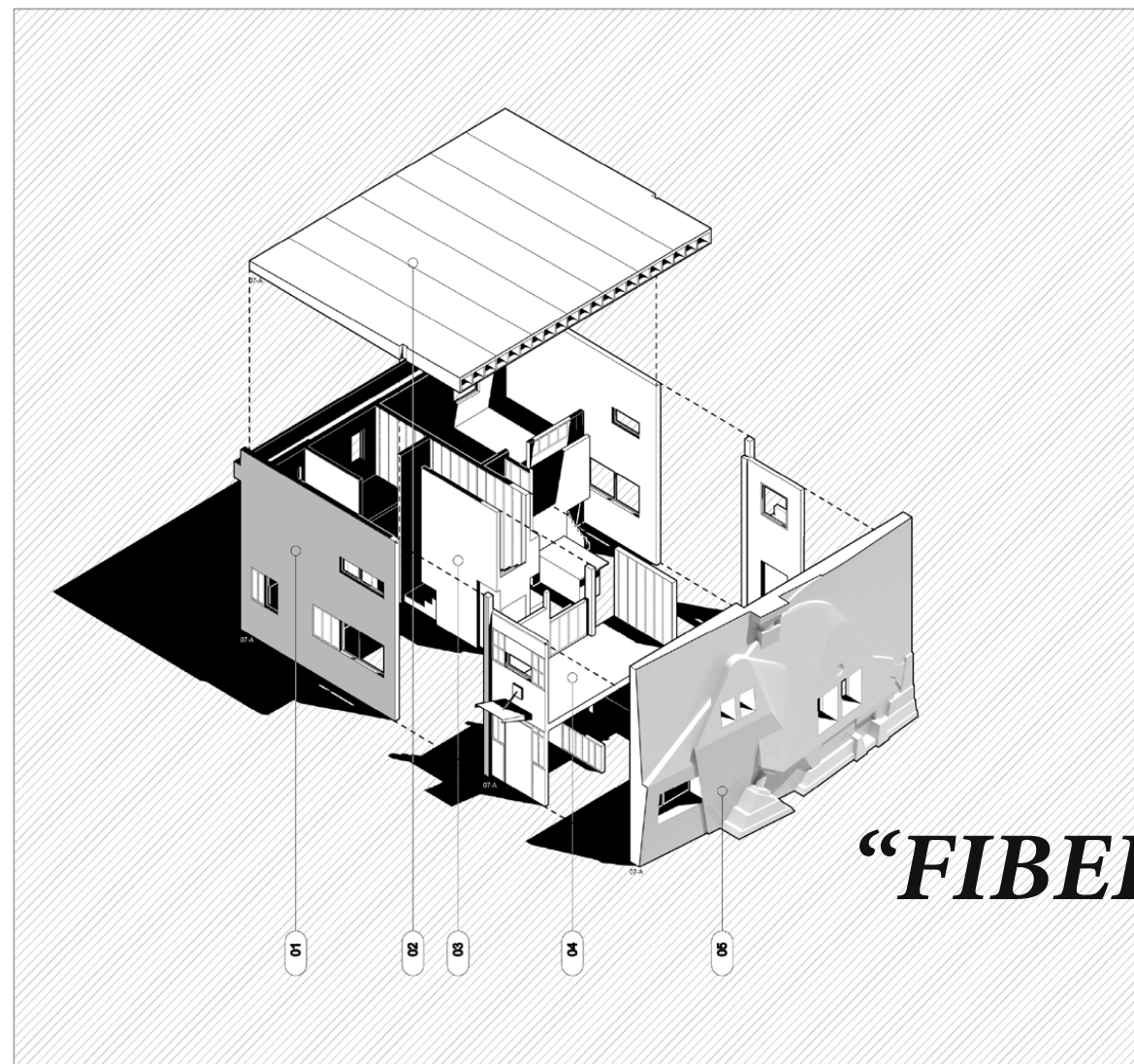
The basic box was constructed by a local GC, at a savagely low

American Craftsman
Frank Lloyd Wright was the master of proportion and volume. Each of his homes is adorned with a lavish degree of ornament; however, few of his contemporaries could rival his clarity in terms of massing. A heavy triangular gable rests above a battered wall of rustic brick. The final work is an icon.

price; but the ornamental facade I built in moduled chunks, myself, using my Mother's driveway (located roughly two hours north in the East Bay Area). I used CNC-cut plywood pieces in order to make the irregular sculptural protrusions and undercuts, and then finished the entire work in a veneer of fiberglass cloth and gel-coat, rolled on white.

At the time, I was but an un-wed, childless bachelor with little to hold me down other than the asphyxiating burdens of this intolerably capitalistic existence; and as such, when it came time for the climactic installation of the pre-made facade modules, I picturesquely slept in the incomplete, un-insulated, structural shell. I sponge-bathed in the local Starbucks, and dined at the closest AM/PM. It took three weeks. It was the dead of winter.





“FIBERGLASSED

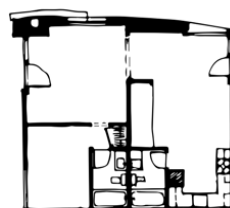
The Rockefeller
The building achieves a perfect synthesis between the ambitions of its vertically rising mass, and its ornamental program -privileging movement, speed, dynamism, of course the triumph of (hu) man.

Precedent
The plan is based loosely on Kahn’s Esherick House, a perfectly symmetrical layout -but in this case mutated and distorted just like the collaged figures on the front facade.

Laugh Track
Here, architecture is the extraordinary subject. It is extraordinary, so that people can be ordinary. Like a laugh track from day time television, it fulfills a social obligation for us; but precisely because it does not ontologically intervene with our world. Powerful architecture is conscious of this fact. It laughs for us, it cries for us, it is James Bond for us.

Architecture represents everything which we, as a species, are not, or could not be.

- Unit Wall 1 A01
- Flat Roof A02
- Stair Case A03
- Mezzanine Level A04
- Facade A05



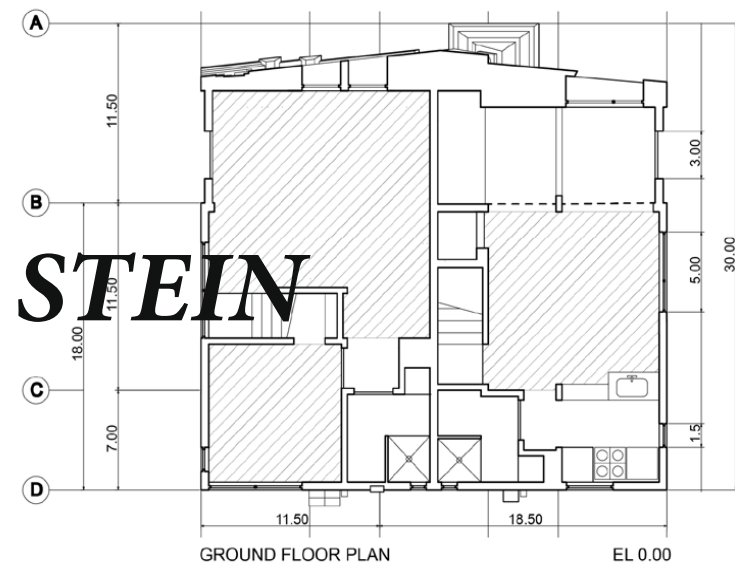
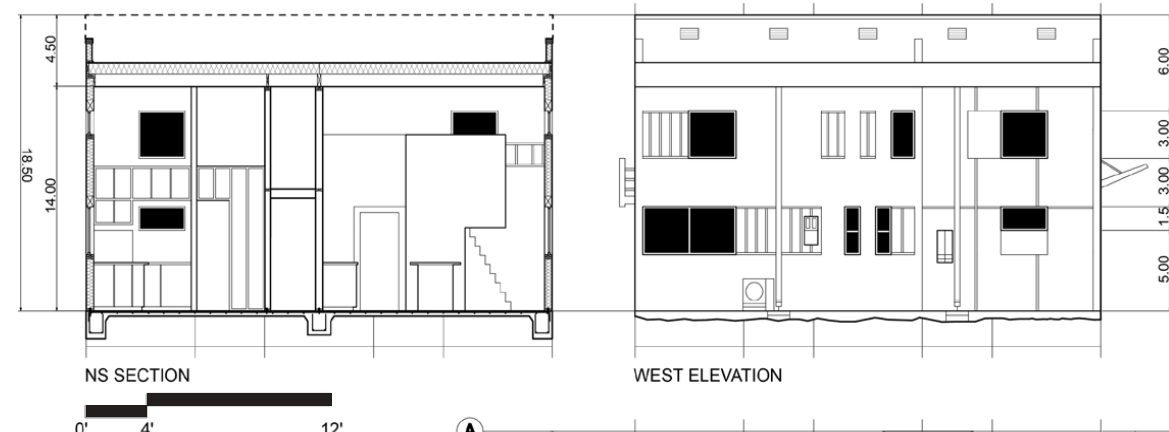
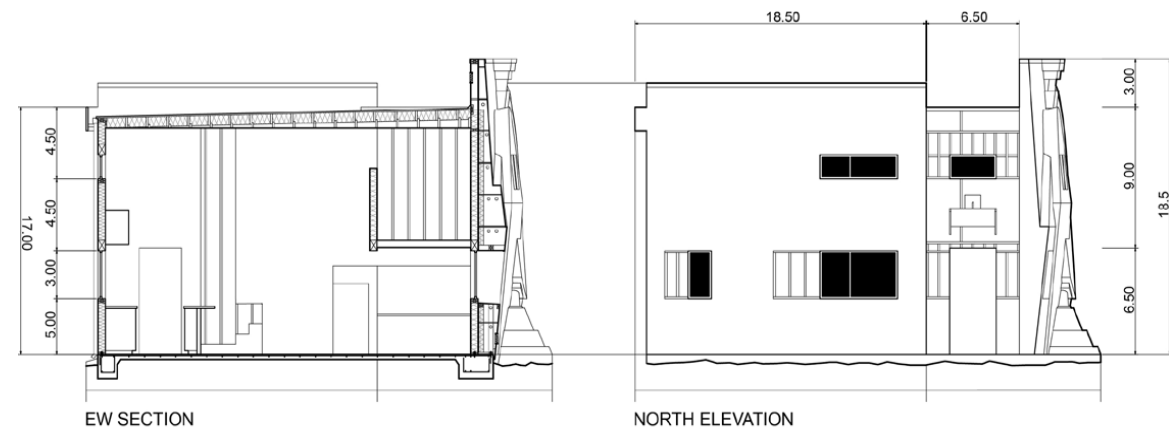
MY DAD’S SKETCH

Project / Title
News

Location
50 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY

Author
Isamu Noguchi

Year
1940



VILLA STEIN

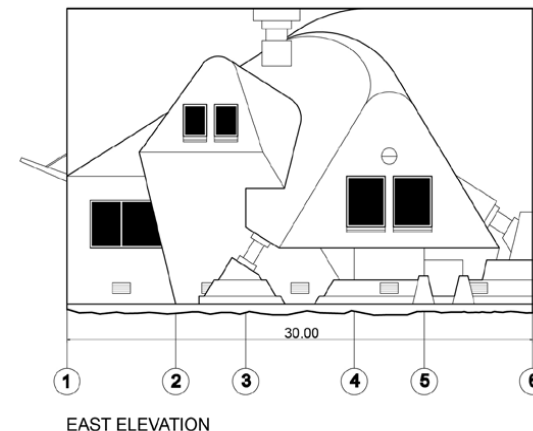
OBSCENITIES”

Project / Title
Duplex McNamara,
Detail 1

Location
Modesto, CA

Medium
Plywood and Fiberglass,
Typ. Stucco Construction

Year
2018



A final Word!

How is it possible that a painted canvas, roughly one sixteenth of an inch in thickness is often more capable of conveying things like weight and gravity and strength than an actual building, comparatively a thousand times the cost, a thousand times the labor, and a billion times the size and mass?

If a master of the Renaissance could see our contemporary works, he would not say that it is bad or ugly, but rather, that it is unfinished. That its shape is mag-

nificent, that its structure is awe-inspiring, but that it might elevate beyond the utilitarian massing study, or the building-like sense of pragmatism remains, as of yet, unseen. As in Ruskin's call for Gothic ornament, architecture is precisely what we add, superfluously, to a completed work - which all the same brings forth its true essence. An ornamental facade or a decorous surface transcend their representations as mere building or object, and in their wake leave only a pure, aesthetic experience.

Buildings are often like caveman, they rarely grunt anything beyond their basic identity: "bank," "me bank," "house;" in short primitive utterances. I claim, however, that if the consequence of architectural intervention should appear in a work (as sadly so often it does not), one should read the words: "this is a bank" or "this is a house;"

or simply, and unequivocally,

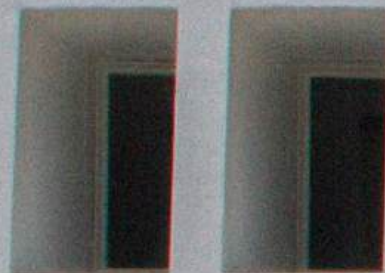
"THIS IS ARCHITECTURE."

Solo

Solo is a hard-boiled smuggler, frozen into radio carbonite. His hands are the only things which have been liberated from the sculpture. They reach out, desperately.

John the Baptist

John the Baptist is an early study in rilievo Staccato. His body has been carved beneath the stone, almost entirely, so that it stands contrasted against a shadowed backdrop.



"TWO SOULS FROZEN TIME CENTURIES PAST"



Stability

The quarterback, and the whoever that is, brace themselves for the hike. Their positions say that action is immanent.



Project / Title
The Empire Strikes Back, Han Solo

Author
LucasFilm LTD.

Year
1980

Project / Title
John the Baptist

Author
Desiderio da Settignano

Year
1450

Many of the projects contained within this document I built alone, with my two hands. Some of them I built with the assistance of trusted friends, paid laborers, inexperienced students, and lets not forget the proverbial hard-headed sub contractor, always with an ax to grind and something to prove.

Of course, many projects never went further than the drawing board or the computer screen.

In every case, however, I have endeavored to make Architecture.



D-FAB

One fabrication drawing, and one CAM file produced all constitutive components for the creation of the facade.

Totaling over 80 sheets of plywood, and over 400 individual pieces, an otherwise simple elevational expression unfolds into something much more geometrically complex.

All planes invariably taper and extrude, forming nothing but acute and oblique angles.

Geometry

Recognizable things, such as platonic geometry, typology etc, are phenomenologically distinct from their abstract counterparts. They represent more than action, more than swarms and flows. They participate in an endlessly reenacted melodrama, situated within a potentialized field of forces, which, I argue, is necessarily detached from our real, lived experience.

Both the moderns and the digitals fetishize the choreographed moving visitor. He or she is the extraordinary subject, while the architecture is ordinary. Villa McNamara (210 Semple st.) rejects this notion.

Project / Title
News

Location
50 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY

Author
Isamu Noguchi

Year
1940

Project / Title
Duplex McNamara,
Main View 2

Location
Modesto, CA

Medium
Plywood and Fiberglass,
Typ. Stucco Construction

Year
2018

