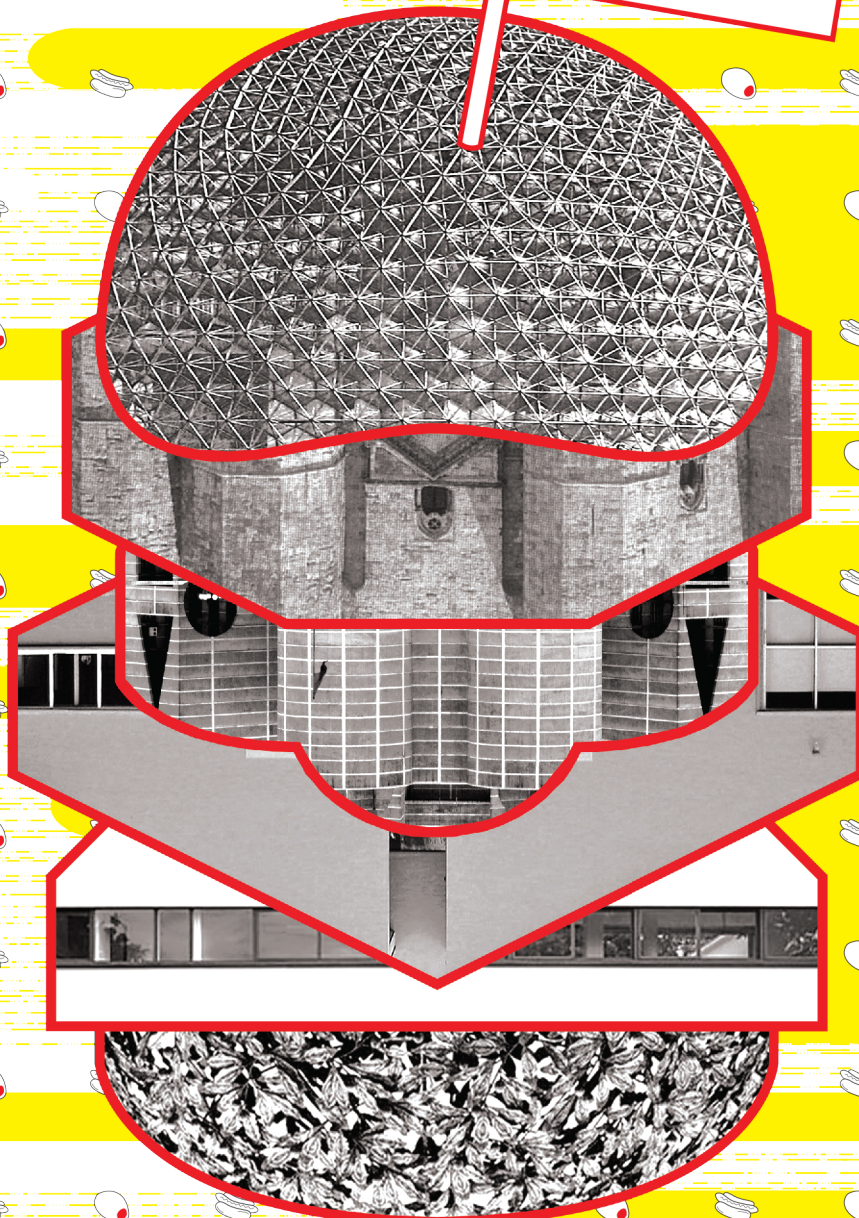




FAT/
ANOREXIC

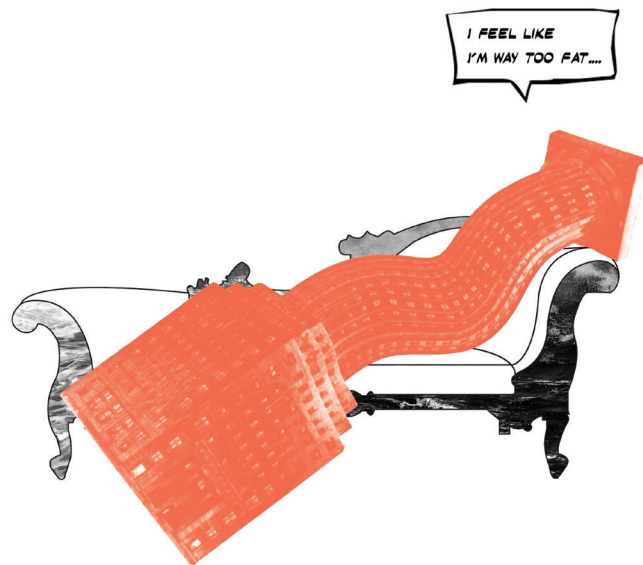


OBSSESSION

FRIILL

OPPOSITION
NOIISOddo

STUPID
COMUN
TY



VIA SCEGLIETE, SIGNOR PROTOPIRO, CHE COSA VOLETE ABBATTERE? LE PARETI, O I PILASTRI? NON RISPONDETE? E IO DISTRUGGERÒ TUTTO. METTETE DA PARTE. EDIFIZI SENZA PARETI, SENZA COLONNE, SENZA PILASTRI, SENZA FREGI, SENZA COMICI, SENZA VOLTE, SENZA TETTI; PIAZZA, PIAZZA, CAMPAGNA RASA.

Giovanni Battista Piranesi

IN THIS FAMOUS QUOTE, GIOVANNI BATTISTA PIRANESI IS ADVOCATING AGAINST THE **SIMPLICITY** OF BUILDING'S SHAPES, DEFENDING INSTEAD AN ARCHITECTURE BASED ON THE RICHNESS OF **ORNAMENTS** AND **SHAPES**: TWO EXTREME POSITIONS ON THE DISCIPLINE THAT CAN BE REFERRED TO AS FAT (OVER-COMPLICATION) AND ANOREXIC (OVER-SIMPLIFICATION). STARTING FROM THIS DIALECTIC, ALREADY DISCUSSED BY PIRANESI IN 1765, THIS ISSUE OF BURRASCA TRIES TO PIN DOWN THE NEWEST AND CONTEMPORARY SHAPES OF THIS TOPIC.

AT FIRST, THE TEXTS OF LACADEE AND REINSCH CAN BE REFERRED TO AS OBSESSIONS. IN THESE ESSAYS CLEARLY EMERGES HOW CERTAIN KINDS OF ARCHITECTURES **MIRROR** THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ITS INHABITANTS: AS OBESITY AND ANOREXIA ARE HUMAN **PATHOLOGIES**, SO THEY CAN BE FOR ARCHITECTURE. IN THE WORKS OF DUVSHANI, CARLI, MELONI AND LA RUCHE THERE ARE INSTEAD DIFFERENT FORMS OF **NARRATIVE** THAT EXPLORE BOTH THE ISSUE OF THE FAT/ANOREXIC, AND THE MEDIUM FOR THE PRODUCTION OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE. CONTRARY TO THESE MORE SURREAL PROVOCATIONS, BACCI, CANEVARI, MOSSA AND MOSCARDIN ARE MORE CLASSICALLY **CRITICAL AND THEORETICAL**, WORKING ON THE OPPOSITION BETWEEN CONCEPTS, SHAPES AND IDEAS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A THEORETICAL SYNTHESIS FOR THE DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE. IN MANNING AND GOSSAGE WE FIND INSTEAD SOME FORMAL **PROVOCATION** ABOUT THE FATNESS AND ANOREXIA OF ARCHITECTURE: PROJECTS THAT USE IRONY AS A CRITICAL TOOL TO REFLECT ABOUT THE FATNESS AND ANOREXIA OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE. IN THE END THE WORKS OF ROTARU, MICOCCI AND PIOTTO ANALYSE THE ISSUE IN A WIDER CONTEXT, WHETHER IT IS URBAN, ECONOMIC OR **POLITIC**. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THE TOPIC OF FAT/ANOREXIC IS DISCUSSED IN AN INTERVIEW OF IRMA BOOM. IN THIS PIECE SHE DISCUSSES THE **FATNESS OR ANOREXIA** OF THE BOOK IN HER ENTIRE PRODUCTION, STARTING FROM THE BIRTH OF HER 2136 PAGES SHV BOOK TO HER TINY BOOK MOCK-UPS PASSING THROUGH THE PUBLICATIONS DESIGNED IN COLLABORATION WITH OMA AND FOR THE ARTIST OLAFUR ELIASSON.

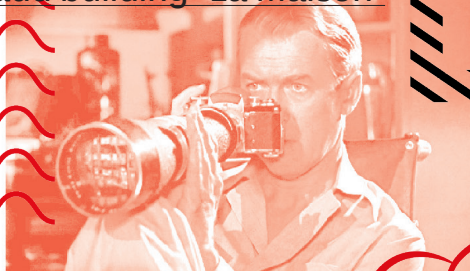


Camille Lacadee :
#mythomaniaS/(beau)strosity
& bodysorder

Fabian Reinsch :
Psychodrama. Jean-Pierre
Raynaud building "La Maison"

6

10



BOO



Giaime Meloni,
Berenice La Ruche :
Futura

Giovanni Carli :
A Tale of Two Houses

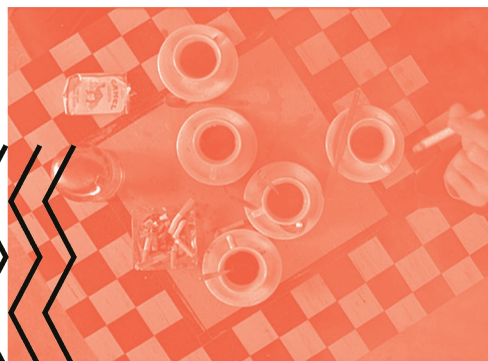
14

18



21

David Duvshani :
Pygi and Gali



Francesco Bacci,
Alessandro Canevari : **26**
Caryatids

Emilio Mossa : **28**
The Construction
role in the shape of
Fat and Anorexic
Architecture

Valeria Moscardin : **32**
Fat formalism
vs anorexic
authenticity: a
matter of value
in archaeological
restoration

Ryan Vincent Manning : **47**
Fat Domino

Frank Gossage : **48**
skinny/FAT

Andrea Anselmo,
Chiara Federico : **36**
The architecture of the book:
An interview to Irma Boom

Mihai Rotaru : **50**
Vertical Threats

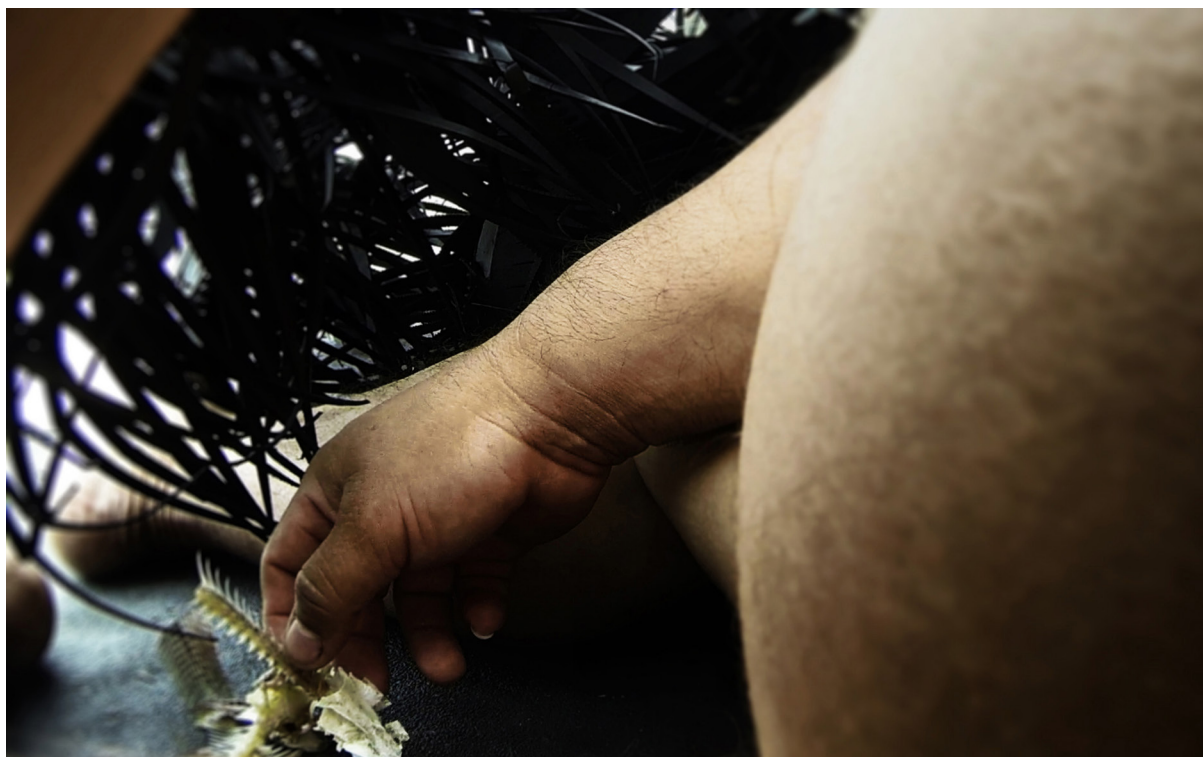
Fabiano Micocci : **54**
The Morality of Diseases.
Bulimia and Anorexia in
Greek Architecture

Andrea Piotto : **58**
Pellicola2

#mythomania

Camille Lacadee

(beau)strosity
bodysorder



SKIN/ENVELOPPE/SHELTER

To hold, to protect, to constrain, imprison, embrace, shield, hold tight, to nest, suffocate, to confine, to nestle ... To make shelter as a primal drive, a feral instinct yet bringing a delicate paradox, a dilemma, sometimes violent ambiguity.

E An interface is surely defined by conflicting forces. The boundary between protection and suffocation appears blurrily; while never simultaneous they are in co-dependency, as an alternation of urges feeding one another and appearing ultimately to be discordant offspring of a unique origin...

There is a basic need for nurturing our first envelope, and further away, clothing, shelters, buildings, cities, as so many straitjackets around something about us, something about our bodies.¹ Our skin forms, takes shape in conformity to what it contains, to our organs and internal apparatuses. Until the end of our body and a beginning of non-body.

CONSUME, DEVOUR, DOWN, EN-GLUT, SCOFF, EN-GORGE, GOBBLE, TOSS OFF, INHALE, QUAFF, STUFF, SWALLOW, SWIG, SWILL, CHOKE DOWN, GULP, RAVEN, CHUGALUG, SCARF DOWN, TAKE IN, WOLF DOWN, BOLT, CRAM, GORMANDIZE, SLOP, GUZZLE, IMBIBE

The body limit becomes pertinent with the holes allowing for its permeability ... at the skin level but also very macro-pragmatically, bluntly, at the idea of orifices. The mouth, the ears, the nose, the sex, the asshole. These holes negotiate a passage. The body receives orders and the figure must be kept in order.

1. "Body am I, and soul"—thus speaks the child. But the awakened and knowing say: body am I entirely, and nothing else; and soul is only a word for something about the body. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

BODYSORDERS

The body defines itself through local scheduled deformations, little trespassing, infractions, by foods, liquids, gazes, traveling through and exiting from each-other orifices. What we absorb, what we ingurgitate, what we swallow, the air we breathe, all these infractions constantly redefine the limits of our bodies and our conception of its wholeness.

I consider the hypothesis that fatness, obesity, could be a way to expand the body-territory, fighting its claustrophobia, pushing further away these zones of infraction, deforming the perception of organs and bones, taking a distance from the visibility and impetus of body functions, by accumulating unnecessary, excessive surpluses, making the misshapen ... the monstrous.



B

A (beau)strosity belly

B (beau)strosity mouth

C (beau)strosity ear

D (beau)strosity belly?

E (beau)strosity

All this spread images by
New-Territories mindmachin-
emakingmyths with RMIT
Melbourne.

MONSTROSITY

In (beau)strosity,² the monster baby-boy, overfed by his mother in an extra-uterine device, straightjacket exoskeleton of black laser-cut paper bones, expands its body-territory; the shelter grows with him, while he becomes immobile, weighted, stagnant, petrified matter. His mother, softly torn between guilt and suffocated love, stuffs him fresh fish flesh through the mouth, stories through the ear. The condemnation of forbidden desires, the repression, grows into physical obstacles, constraints, interlocked self-repression, as the motive mechanism of their relationship. It feels monstrous, as each offspring of repressed emotion, a counterweight for guilt, it feels dirty...

When looking online for *monster's* definition I find: "something (such as a building) that is very large and ugly"³ and further down, "a malformation, something deviating from the normal, an object of often frightening size, force or complexity, an excessively bad or shocking example."

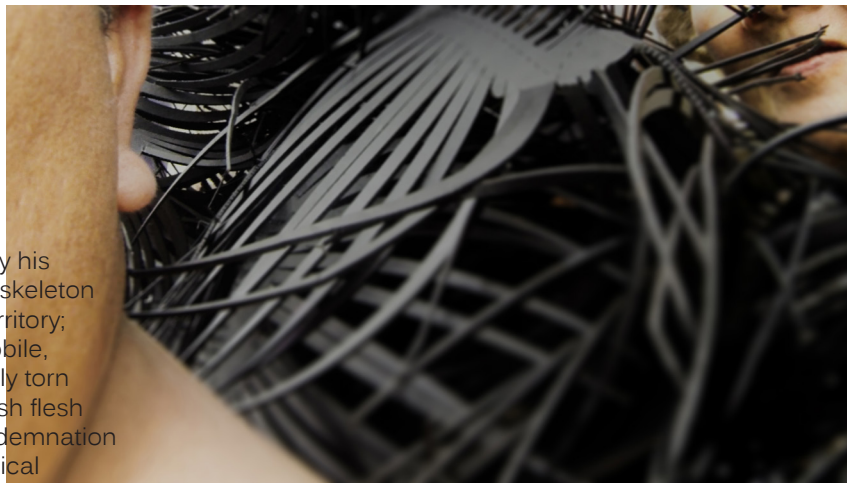
Etymologically monster comes from *monstrare*: to show, to demonstrate, and monstrum: "a sign, a divine omen..." A monster was a message from god. *Monstrare* itself comes from the root monere, to warn, to advise, which also gave birth to *premonition*, *demonstrate*, and *money*. A monster was first a sign or an instruction, trying to warn us about some kind of evil.⁴

2. (beau)strosity / 2013 / Chak-krawat, Bangkok, Thailand / pathology: claustrophilic bulimia nervosa / prop: 200 laser-cut resin paper components / film credits _ producer(s): New-Territories (Francois Roche, Camille Lacadée) + RMIT (Gwylim Jahn) / on-set director: Anastasiya Vitusevych / writer(s): Dan Schulz, Eleanor Tullock / cast: Ad + Chanja / cinematography: Lila Athanasidou / set director(s): Ada Umgofia, Crystal Song Choo Jing, Dan Schulz, Eleanor Tullock, Loo Yew Hann, Sam Verschoren, Vivian Kon Ching Sian / sound director: Loo Yew Hann / casting director: Tree / security: Crystal Song Choo Jing / blood effect: Eleanor Tullock

3. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/monstrosity>

4. This benign interpretation was proposed by Saint Augustine, who did not see the monster as inherently evil, but as part of the natural design of the world, a kind-of deliberate category error. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monster>

C



WARNING

The origins of the word *monster* are filled with fear, driven by a delusive quest for enlightenment over the banality of death, a pretense to escape from life and its miserable fascist impetus to self-preserve.

The boy and his mother are engaged in a repressed oedipal setting,⁵ where the father is absent or re/mis/placed by sheltering confinement and over-feeding. While this is extremely commonplace, the very making-up of these torturous physio/physio/psycho/logic/al mechanisms and apparatuses is tinted with symptomatic beauty. The body-shelter pathology is both an attempt to fight and surrender to the world's order, to its repression through condemnation and policing,⁶ and the fatty-baby-boy drifts into a psycho-computing-animal which defi(n)es its situation and condition of living simultaneously to the shelter's emergence, in co-dependency...

The "architecture" in our *#mythomaniaS* series is not meant to liberate but to betray something about us, bespeaking a kind of self-monstrification, leaving us half-consciously confined while driving our daily emissions in the disclosure of a love&hate surrender&resist enacted struggle with and against these traps.



E

5. "If desire is repressed, it is because every position of desire, no matter how small, is capable of calling into question the established order of a society: not that desire is asocial, on the contrary. But it is explosive; there is no desiring-machine capable of being assembled without demolishing entire social sectors. Despite what some revolutionaries think about this, desire is revolutionary in its essence—desire, not left-wing holidays!—and no society can tolerate a position of real desire without its structures of exploitation, servitude, and hierarchy being compromised." Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (1972, 126-127).

6. "It is in one and the same movement that the repressive social production is replaced by the repressing family, and that the latter offers a displaced image of desiring-production that represents the repressed as incestuous familial drives." Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (1972, 130).

D



Psychodrama

JEAN-PIERRE

Fabian Reinsch

RAY
BU

“LA MAISON”

1. English: “I never succeeded better to show who I am as when I was trying to build a house.”

Source: Petra Liebl-Osborne, “Ein Haus wie ich” *Die Casa Malaparte auf Capri* (München: HypoVereinsbank Kultur & Gesellschaft, 1999), 1.

Living is one of the essential aspects of architecture. Delving further into this topic, the portrayal of one's own home becomes as necessary as the idealised aesthetic of a healthy body. While the average bohemian satisfies this desire towards an extended self-fulfilment by copying fashionable interior design blogs, some individuals went a bit further.

Ma non m'era mai avvenuto di mostrare quale io sono, come quando mi sono provato a costruire una casa.¹
Curzio Malaparte

Presenting himself, or an image of himself, was the intention of eccentric writer Curzio Malaparte in his Capri cliff-side dwelling, designed in collaboration with architect Adalberto Libera in the late thirties. Alongside his strive for representation, the act of building a house expresses Malaparte's desire to create his own ideal place on Earth. The fact that such an act is a process accompanied by troubles, is underlined in his above statement where he speaks of “trying to build a house.”

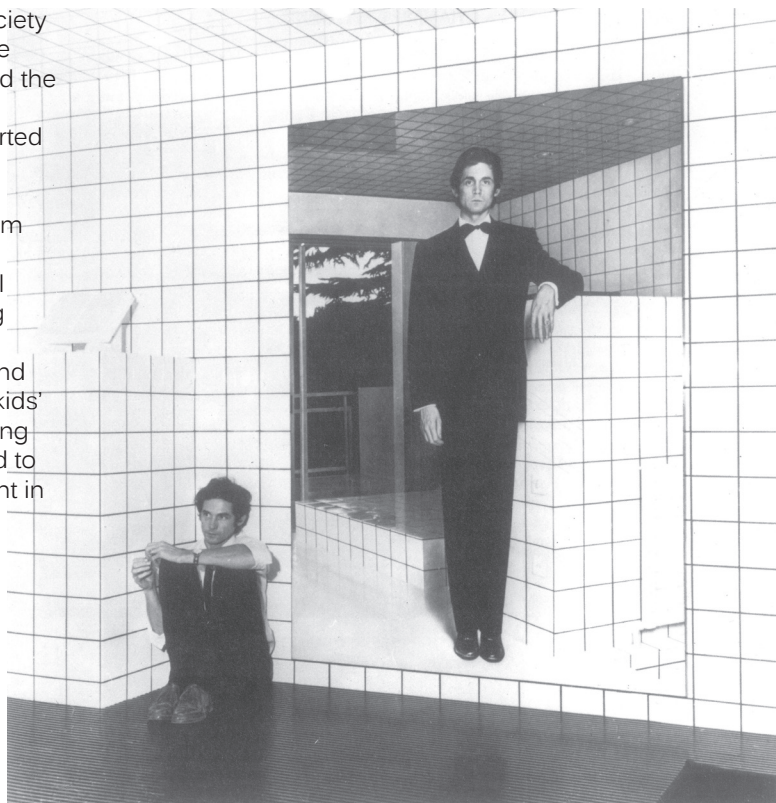
In the lifelong relationship with our surroundings, the creation of a new home puts us to the test. Similarly to our relationship with the body, the will for perfection directs us into a psychological fight that may, as often in the case of anorexia, end in madness.

J'ai commencé par divorcer, cela m'apparut la première chose à faire.²

Jean-Pierre Raynaud

In the case of Jean-Pierre Raynaud the madness began with the escape from his normal, middle-class life which he had just embarked on with his wife in 1969. The artist, who started his career with robust compositions of industrially produced pieces—the so-called psycho-objects—found himself living in a conventional modern two-storey house on the outskirts of Paris. Realising this banality of perfect family life that society was promoting at the time was not suited to his lifestyle, he began a long process of identification between himself and the house.

Living alone in the house after the divorce, in 1971 he started to cover the walls and ceiling of what was the living room, now becoming the music room, with 15x15 centimetres white, ceramic tiles. His initial fascination for tiles came from their robust and hygienic aspect, as used in hospitals and metro-stations. After utilising this simple industrial material in some of his earlier artworks, Raynaud was now opening up the possibility of trying it in a totally different dimension inside of the house. The floor changed into black rubber and other rooms became step by step involved. The potential kids' room became a padded cell where an opening in the ceiling provided some zenithal light beneath which Raynaud used to sleep. The whole house became a fundamental experiment in the search for a surrounding correlating to his personality.



A

2. English: "I started by divorce, that appeared to me to be the first thing to do."
Source: transcript of film by Michelle Porte, *La Maison de Jean-Pierre Raynaud*, 1993, in José Alvarez, ed., *La Maison de Jean-Pierre Raynaud, Construction, Deconstruction* (Paris, Éditions du Regard, 2011), 37.

3. English: "I became the centre of a psychodrama"
Source: Denyse Durand-Ruel, Yves Tissier, and Bernard Wauthier-Wurmser, *Jean-Pierre Raynaud La Maison* (Paris, Éditions du Regard, 1988), 41.

Je suis devenu le centre d'un psychodrame.³

Jean-Pierre Raynaud

In the first phase of intervention, the need of change and the necessity of being different seems to be quite strong. As with anorexia, the "normal" people's perception and the victim's own perception begins to shift apart. This narcissistic start—highlighted by Raynaud's double self-portrait—is followed by a time where he wants to encapsulate himself from the outside world.

By 1974, the house has been transformed with a bunker-like appearance. Khaki coloured, with curved edges, a metallic bridge, barbed wire and one single window creating a horizontal slit of two meters deep, the interior world was held at maximum distance from its environment. In his seclusion, Raynaud equipped more rooms with ceramic tiles. The padded cell disappeared, the freshly tiled room was furnished with a hospital bed, and a long, narrow, white painted room at lower level became a gallery with plates of tiles hanging on the walls. By putting some flowers in front of each composition and naming this room "la crypte" he created a morbid, sacred space. Raynaud had become totally obsessed by the materiality of the tiles.



B

Je veux dans ma maison une pureté totale.⁴
Jean-Pierre Raynaud

In comparison to the bunker, which was just a copied image, he found in his engagement with the ceramic tiles something of a concrete realness that was more fascinating. Consequently, Raynaud decided to neutralise the house from the outside by painting it white and he focused on expanding the presence of the tiles in the interior. To reflect pure light into the rooms it was then necessary to tile the floors. At the same time, a homogeneously clad surrounding, formed by the black five millimetre joints between the tiles implied a Cartesian grid, which gave Raynaud a feeling of order and certitude.⁵ He was fast approaching a space where his imagination “*peut fonctionner*.”⁶ Therefore, all pieces of furniture, including doors, disappeared, resulting in a total unity: one big psycho-object determined by the overall presence of tiles.

The following years were driven by architectural studies in an attempt to find the perfect arrangement of the openings, the form of the rooms and their interaction. After his commission to design Noirlac abbey's windows, Raynaud became inspired to use little, squared, glass plates in the openings of the house, mirroring the proportion of the tiles. All these archaic forms, including a *serre* reminiscent of ancient baths, evoked a sacred, vibrant feeling.

4. English: “I want in my house a total purity.”
 Source: *ibid.*, 115.

5. “[...] le quadrillage de l'espace, lié au blanc, m'a donné un sentiment de sécurité et d'équilibre.”
 Source: *ibid.*, 43.

6. “Ma maison est totalement vide de confort et d'information, c'est un espace mental uniquement, un espace où mon imagination peut fonctionner.”
 Source: *ibid.*, 135.

7. English: “It would be the end, namely the fulfilment. It would be death.”
 Source: Max Frisch, *Kunst der Erwartung, Anmerkungen eines Architekten*, 1941, in Hans Mayer, ed., *Max Frisch, Gesammelte Werke in zeitlicher Folge, 1931-1944, Band 1* (Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, 1976), 189.

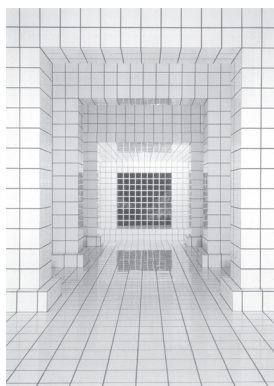
8. The *Haus ohne Eigenschaften* (English: house without qualities/character) is the second house which O. M. Ungers built for himself in the city of Cologne in 1995.

Es wäre das Ende, nämlich die Erfüllung. Es wäre der Tod.⁷
Max Frisch

From Raynaud's point of view, the house reached the final level of perfection in 1988. There was nothing to add or subtract—nothing to change. The struggle for the perfect body pushes the anorexic sufferer into increasing danger, until the assumed perfection is not far from death. This self-destructive ambition engaged Raynaud: the only possibility was the demolition of the house. As an act of parting, the debris was collected in 1000 metal bowls and exhibited in the Musée d'Art contemporaine de Bordeaux in 1993.

Frisch's quote from the essay “*Kunst der Erwartung*” expresses the impossibility to manage perfection. Nonetheless, a lot of architects did try to build a house for themselves. While John Soane, who kept extending and rearranging his London house for his immense collection of artefacts, stands as an example for a lifelong building and improving process on one project, others took this process to a more intellectual level by building new apartments and houses for themselves again and again. The simple wooden hut called *Le Cabanon* was probably a wise idea of Le Corbusier's by having only the minimum facilities needed. Oswald Mathias Ungers on the other hand, ended up in a more Palladian totality in his *Haus ohne Eigenschaften*; a building that attempts to neutralise all the banal requirements.⁸

The list may be extended and it is quite obvious that, by building our own house, we are leading ourselves into a trap of a difficult and dangerous psychodrama.



D

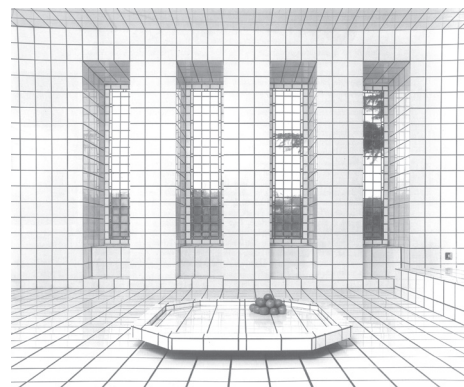
A Raynaud with self-portrait, music room, first stage (© Archives Denyse Durand-Ruel)

B Bedroom, second stage (© Archives Denyse Durand-Ruel)

C Music room, final stage (© Archives Denyse Durand-Ruel)

D Gallery, former crypt, final stage (© Archives Denyse Durand-Ruel)

E Destruction, 1993 (© Archives Denyse Durand-Ruel)



C



E

FUTURA

Giaime Meloni Berenice La Ruche

The meaning of exploring the city as a human body refers to our desire to create possible allusions, playing on contrasts and build references between two different identities. Concretely, it is a clumsy citation of the oneiric dream made by Federico Fellini in his famous film *Le Tentazioni del Dottor Antonio*. As well as the body of Anita Ekberg visually communicates with the pure forms of the rationalist architecture of the EUR district, so the exploration conducted in these pages starts from the common curiosity for the definition of a relationship between two imagined bodies. The aim is not to make a comparison, but to simply juxtapose different forms and fragments of bodies.

Thus, the story of Futura, a young city that discovers naively its body, was born. Looking in the mirror, the images found are just a fragmentary appearance of reality.

She's Futura.

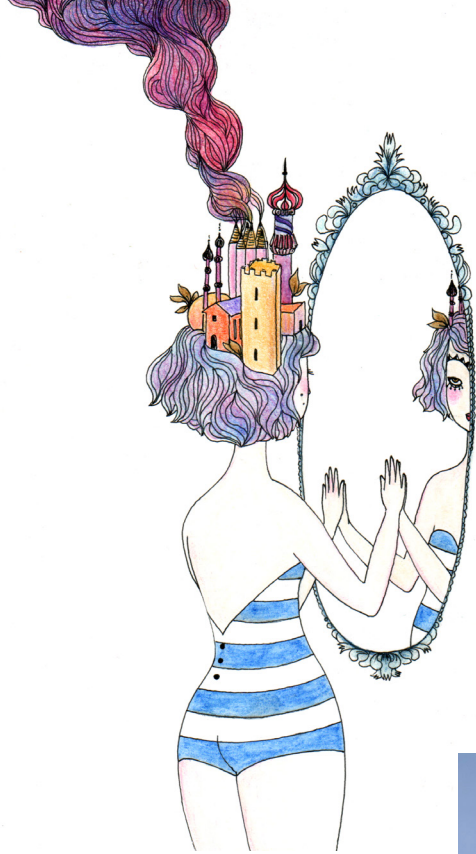
She was born while the world, distract and floating, was questioned by the existence of a horizon beyond the Pillars of Hercules. She likes puddles, pools of water and cups of coffee, because, through those she can see, at least sometimes, inside the world. In her head she has innumerable tangles and her ideas are architectures; when she is confused, she looks between the lines, she knots the wisps of smoke and she makes new forms, in spite of Miss Geometry.

If we will ever look, let's do it strongly.

Futura thinks that a life in which we are observed and in which we can always be recognized is a nightmare.

She's provocative. She uses the stairs and frankly, she does not care of elevators.

Life is evolving and the path is littered with curves.







photos © Giaime Meloni
drawings © Berenice La Ruche

A Tale of TWO HOUSES

Giovanni Carli

The fat house or the accumulation of wonders

The anorexic house or the disappearance of thickness

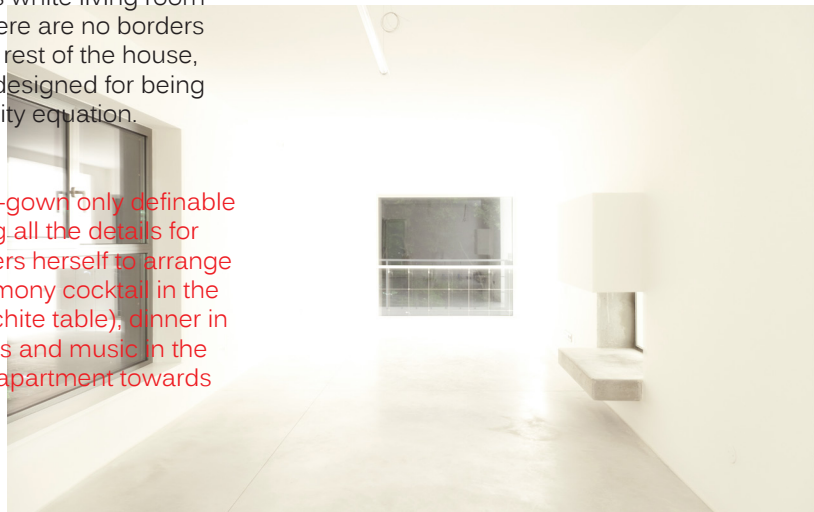
Anyone of a certain importance in this town has been at least once to the Mirombor¹ family apartment. It is an apartment of generous dimensions, located on the top floor of a rather decadent twenty-first century building of no particular importance. The outrageous inner world is perfectly hidden behind an anonymous *facade* and the typical tedious routine of a bourgeois residential district not too far from the city center. It is not so clear what the Morimbors exactly do, but their exceptional talent is entertaining guests every night and for every occasion. Tonight an exclusive party is announced to celebrate something important that has been already forgotten.

Ground floor. He is jaded. Another week, another month, another year has passed and nothing has changed in his lonely life. It is late and C.J. San² knows that, but he does not care. Early on that morning he read about a new philosophy that does not measure time: since the idea of Space is endless, why Time should be blocked in the uncomfortable cage of the habit of hours and days? C.J. is relaxing on the white couch of his white living room of his white house: there are no borders in this room, as in the rest of the house, everything has been designed for being the result of a continuity equation.

Gabriela Mirombor, in an exaggerated exotic yellow evening-gown only definable as a portable architecture made of folds and twists, is verifying all the details for the night. The sixteen guests will arrive at 20:30 (she remembers herself to arrange two maids in the vestibule to collect coats and furs), first ceremony cocktail in the library (gin, whiskey and sodas bottle are placed on the malachite table), dinner in the *Ottoman dining room* (four courses) and to follow cocktails and music in the *Blue Salon*. Gabriela Mirombor leaves her private wing of the apartment towards the overflowing rooms of social amusement.

1. The name of the family is composed by the initials of Enrique Miralles, OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture) and Francesco Borromini. The selected architects are chosen for representing a style exquisitely heterogeneous in terms of creative processes, complexity of design and decorations.

2. The name is an acronym of architects David Chipperfield, Inigo Jones and SANAA. These three figures have been chosen for their dedication to the pursuit of a synthetic space and for the formal rigour of their design.





Ground floor. C.J. San bought the house five years ago and he has transformed it in a milky shelter for his life of dearth, or better as an escape from the chaotic jungle of the arrogant city. C.J. makes absence as an aesthetic principle: no objects to collect means no memories of what it was. C.J. believes in the future and the rooms' void is reserved for secret technology and it is waiting for something still to come. The house is a holy temple undressed of any kind of decoration. In the lounge he is looking at the steel kitchen, realizing he probably cooked two or three times since he moved in, even if he is now addicted to the all TV programs about food. Only quick bites at night. Now it is really late. Fuck the new philosophy!

Gabriela Mirombor enters the Ottoman dining room to talk to the maids who are finishing the table decorations. One of them is just positioning the last two silver peacock placeholders. There are some rules to respect on arranging a big table of commensals in order to stimulate a good conversation: always interchange a man and a woman, not to instigate enemies, not to isolate useful friendships. The light blue walls of the room vomit dozens of portraits of ancestors (or assumed) in black thick frames and several genuine prints of the eighteenth century representing scenes of regular administration within Topkapi palace. The table is perfectly set; the chairs are placed at the right distance. Silver and bone cutlery and crystal goblets shine.

First floor. After a quick shower, C.J. San is now shaving. The bathroom is curiously the most precious room of the house. The white concrete, the haunting blood-cell of the house, is absent in favour of green marble on the floor and onyx for the walls. In this modern frozen environment, room of silence with no mirrors allowed, C.J. takes care of his slight body: the usual treatment starts from the steam room, then a fennel infusion and fifteen minutes of whirlpool.



He now has to choose the outfit for the up-coming evening: he has only white shirts, black blazers and pants. C.J. San is a follower of the black and white post-apocalyptic fashion of extreme conceptual rigour.

At 20:28 the first guests ring the bell. The butler opens the door and introduces Mr. and Mrs. F. in the vestibule where, as disposition, the maids collect the outerwears. Mr. and Mrs. F. are invited by the butler to join the householders in the library. Cristobal and Gabriela Mirombor, seated on the green velvet sofa before the big mahogany bookcase facing the door, she receives the guests holding a Martini cocktail, while he had a light whiskey and soda. *Clichès*, smiles, hugs and sarcastic jokes about the current political situation: the ritual is repeated at every arrival. The library guarantees a warm atmosphere and it protects the elegant fellowship with its pile of books, wooden floors, magic carpets from Damascus and suffused lights.

Second floor. Two cigarettes on the balcony, a glance over the reflecting totems of modernity and then C.J. switches off the devices of the house from his iPhone. In the half dark of the twilight he goes down the central spiral staircase from his naked bedroom (a bed and a medieval cabinet of medical drugs) to the aseptic ground floor where there is no risk of indigestion, seventy square meters on the three stores: one room per floor, *esistenza minimum* at radical contemporary adaptation. He gets on the car, dumbfounded, and drives towards his destination.

photos © Giovanni Carli

After a gigantic dinner, whose main protagonist has been the pheasant stuffed with prunes and served with gelatin fruit aspic, the Mirombors and their guests dance, smoke and drink in the baroque Blue Salon. The fifty square meters living room is a wunderkammer full of objects bought during travels in far away lands or inherited from old aunts and decrepit relatives. The list includes: ivory horns and fangs, illegal trophies of hunting mission in Tanzania, dehydrated and embalmed puffer-fishes, wax sculptures of the Second Empire, Buddha's heads, erotic netsuke of a lost Japan, devilish apotropaic puppets, Byzantine eggs, giant beetles under glass, a hippopotamus of lapis lazuli, Chinese lacquer boxes, lobsters in silver clip, stolen *ex-voto* from Mexican churches and much more... This is the space that satisfies Mirombors' hunger of power and celebrates the redundant collection of items. The music suddenly stops; someone has just rung the bell.

C.J. is waiting, nervous, at the entrance door. The butler opens and with an utterly astonished face exclaims: "Mr. San, what a surprise! You were not an expected guest for tonight". "I know. May I enter?".



Pygi and Gali

David Duvshani

If Pygmalion's Galatea should really come to life, the style in which he formed her would no longer have any meaning. This is one of the main issues E. H Gombrich addresses in his essay "Mediations on a Hobby Horse:" a study of form and function in art.

Galatea is not a specific woman; she is Pygmalion's idea of a woman. And since it is an illusion, in order to be effective, the function is more important than realistic appearance. Presuming he was working on a hobby horse, then what matters most would be its function, to be ridden. This Form follows Function philosophy is at the base of the "less is more" ideology expressed by modern thinkers such as Adolf Loos.

But...what is the function of love, or beauty?







DOES A FLOWER NEED MORE THAN ONE
COLOR TO ATTRACT A BEE? WILL A
DECORATED CAKE TASTE BETTER?



I DON'T KNOW ABOUT
YOU PYGI, BUT I
FALL IN LOVE WITH
PERSONS, NOT IDEAS!



AND, WELL, YOU COULD
HAVE MADE ANY WOMAN
IN THE WORLD, AND YOU
STILL MADE ME, AND I
THINK THAT'S
JUST SO
SWEET &
CUTE!



I'M NOT SURE YOU GOT IT THE
RIGHT WAY, BUT HEY, IF FORM
FOLLOWS FUNCTION, WHO SAID BEAUTY
AIN'T A
FUNCTION?



CARYATIDS

Francesco Bacci Alessandro Canevari

1. We refer to the definition of *Grand Récit* given by Jean-François Lyotard, *The Post-modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

2. Robert Venturi, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977).

3. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, "Architecture and the Times," in *Mies van der Rohe*, Philip C. Johnson (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1947).

4. Cited in Peter Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

In 1966 Twiggy was named "the face of 1966" by the Daily Express and voted British woman of the year. By the end of the 1960s, she was the most popular model all over the world, appearing on the covers of magazines such as Vogue, The Tatler, Elle or Newsweek.

In 2015 Milk Model Management announced that they had signed Tess Holliday: the largest plus-size model to be signed to a mainstream modeling agency. She is 1.65 metres tall and weighs 130 kilogrammes.

Is this just a sign of a cultural change of the standards of taste throughout generations?

This is not; it represents instead a different understanding and transmission of the narratives which set the standards of taste, in the path from modernism towards postmodernism.

Twiggy is a modern icon. She is not one of the possible alternatives in oppositions to the old standard of feminine beauty. She is *The Modern Alternative*. Her short hair, her skinny body and miniskirt embody an aesthetic revolution: the *Grand Récit* which indicates the way to be univocally followed towards modernity.¹

Tess Holliday is instead not the icon of this era, but one of the many. She is part of a plurality that is the main characteristic of a postmodern view which is inclusive rather than exclusive and admits several possibilities—Tess Holliday, but also the skinny transgender Lea T, the curvy Ashley Graham or Winnie Harlow affected by vitiligo.

In addition to this, Tess builds her look with a syncretic set of aesthetic references: oversized body, as a sign of the over-consuming culture, traditional pop haircuts and makeup from the forties and fifties, contemporary clothes and a mix of old-school and new-school tattoos.

We will try to apply these two definitions upon two well-known iconic columns.

As it is known, Mies van der Rohe designed the *German Pavilion* for the Barcelona International Exposition in 1929. For this building (and for others to come, like Villa Tugendhat completed in 1930, or the *Neue Nationalgalerie* opened in 1968) he designed the revolutionary cross column.

Expanding upon the comparison it seems proper to affirm that this new and modern shape of an old architectural element presents Twiggy's characteristics: it is essential, exclusive, dogmatic, univocal and sacre. In Venturi's words "heroic and original."²

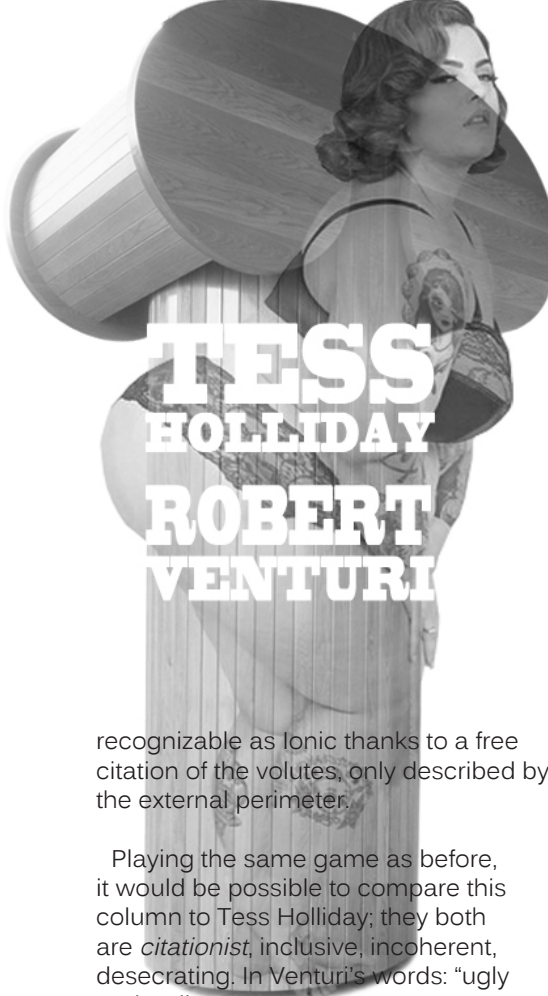
It demands to incarnate the *zeitgeist* of that precise historical moment and to address the way people would intend the Modern aesthetic to be. Mies said: "Architecture is the will of an epoch translated into space." In this case we should more likely say "[...] into shape."³

In 1976 the addition to the Allen Memorial Art Museum by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown was completed. For this building, Venturi designed a kind of Ionic column, hidden in tiny nook at the rear of the building. It looks disproportionate, covered in wooden slats, with an enormous capital



Twiggy and Mies' column stand alone as heroic manifestos pointing at the only way to be followed inevitably.

Tess and Venturi's column point at themselves showing that it is necessary to admit that there is no right way and that it is possible to joke around this complexity.



recognizable as Ionic thanks to a free citation of the volutes, only described by the external perimeter.

Playing the same game as before, it would be possible to compare this column to Tess Holliday; they both are *citationist*, inclusive, incoherent, desecrating. In Venturi's words: "ugly and ordinary."

Venturi's column does not talk a modern language. It shows, like Tess does, one of the possible vocabularies we could customize through a free use of citations and re-elaborations of styles with a significant ironic content.

Instead of being a modern opposition of the Beaux-Arts dogmas, it jokes around them transforming "Beaux-Arts" into "Bizarre."

This is the way we intend them to be post-modern. Not in composing a specific style but asserting that there's not an univocal aesthetic law to be followed and performed dogmatically; admitting that the specific type is just one of the possibles.

In other words, the Modern doctrine admits only one truth, which is at the same time indemonstrable and not subject to critique. The post-modern one, according to Lyotard, is instead a set of partial and sometimes contradictory *Petit Récits*.

Twiggy and Mies' column stand alone as heroic manifestos pointing at the only way to be followed inevitably.

Tess and Venturi's column point at themselves showing that it is necessary to admit that there is no right way and that it is possible to joke around this complexity.

Mies' column became the archetype as soon as the *avant-garde* became a style, Venturi's one re-elaborated a type, translating the symbols of a known vocabulary.

In 1862 James Fergusson stated that the process through which a hut becomes a temple is the same by which turns a simple chicken turns into a "*côtolette à l'impérial*."⁴

This is simply what also both Twiggy and Tess are about: they turn the simple necessity to dress into style, (or fashion).

Even Mies' and Venturi's columns are about this dualistic couple. Their evident metaphorical content is what makes them examples of great architecture.

The process we displayed is what equates the two columns. The differences are in the meanings expressed by shapes that can only be understood through the narratives (*Grand or Petit*) formulated to legitimize the arbitrary choice of that specific aesthetic language.

The construct role in the sha fa

Emilio Mossa

anorexic architecture

1. The *character*—*caractère*—is a social concept born in France in the mid-eighteenth century. It was defined by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux as what connects function, structure and decoration in a work.

Anthony Vidler, *Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (1736-1806)* (Milano: Mondadori Electa, 1994), 24-26.

2. In 1851, Gottfried Semper explains the origins of architecture through the lens of anthropology. His book, *The Four Elements of Architecture*, divides architecture into four distinct elements: the hearth, the roof, the enclosure and the mound. In Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 19-37.

0. Introduction.

The aim of this essay is to highlight the role of construction in the production of architectural shape through a comparison of some particular cases with different and/or similar *characters*.¹

Consequently, the fat or anorexic essence of architecture can be defined by the shape expression through the technique and materials.

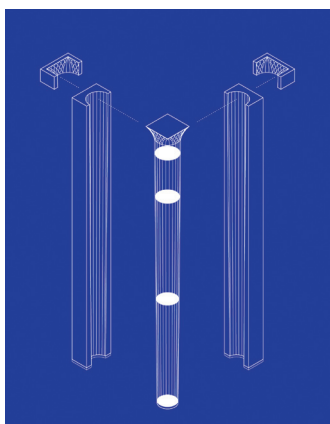
In the 1950s, Frank Lloyd Wright explained to his students the two main structural characters of architecture—the trilithic and the filigree construction—by placing his hands one on top of the other or weaving them. The first, that is inevitably linked to ancient and pre-modern architecture like the one of the Greek orders, is decoration through construction, while the second one, referring to Semper's categories of the mat,² can be related to the vernacular architecture: an architecture in which the importance of lining materials compared to the loadbearing ones is crucial. Similarly, the place of production of architecture plays a critical role in the definition of

the materials—in the transition from state of nature to state of work—and therefore, it influences both the mechanical and formal characteristics of the building.

1. Auguste Perret's *Musée des Travaux Publics*, 1936-1946 vs Le Corbusier's *Ville Savoye*, 1928-1931.

The column against the pillar. This is the main issue that defines the difference between Fat and Anorexic as well as the difference between a building like the *Musée des Travaux Publics* and *Ville Savoye*. In Perret's building, the column determines the character of the construction and it is the main component and symbol of the trilithic system. It is the bearer of the values of classical architecture, but at the same time, the representation of the infinite capacity of the new construction in reinforced concrete. The order of the *Musée*, called *Perret order*, is shaped as a kind of inverse of the Greek classical column. This solution is a compositional response to a structural problem dictated by the new technology of reinforced concrete. In this type of construction, in contrast to that of Greek

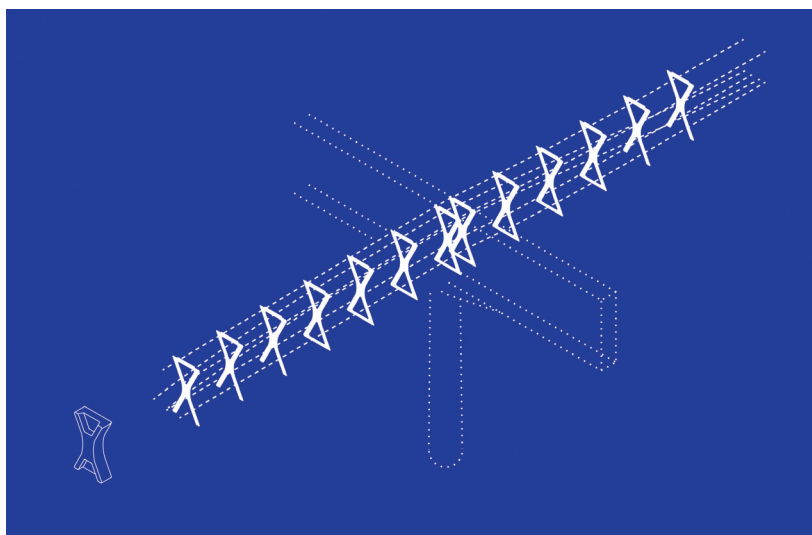
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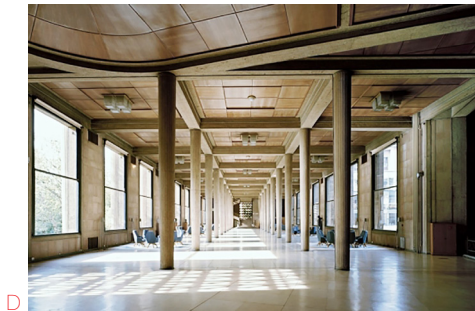


C

A Frank Lloyd Wright's hands in 1964, the trilitic and filigree construction.

B Blueprint#1: Making the Perret's column by Emilio Mossa and Giacomo Nava, the shape of the column determined by the materials and the construction technique.

C Blueprint#2: Making the Mater Misericordia's beam by Emilio Mossa and Giacomo Nava, the variable X section of the longitudinal beams defined by the variation of the bending moment that inverts in the supports.



D

3. Roberto Gargiani, *Auguste Perret (1874-1954). Teoria e opere* (Milano: Mondadori Electa, 1993), 163-164.

4. It is interesting that Le Corbusier uses a different type window as a voluntary separation from the classic form of the building and not to an actual change in terms of typological and residential building.

5. Giulio Barazzetta, "Milano anni '50, tecnica e architettura," *Casabella* 721 (April 2004): 82-91

temple, whose column is submitted to axial loads, a greater dimension of the pillar is necessary to oppose the bending moment in the upper joints that connect the column to the beam.

In Perret's column, the marks left by the wooden formwork used for the casting of the material, replace the classical fluting. Similarly, the capital consists of a palm motif, a conceptual relation between wood and concrete, one giving and one taking shape to the component.³

If Perret, expert appreciator of *Historie de l'Architecture* by Auguste Choisy, resumed the classic themes of architecture redefining them in a modern aesthetic, Le Corbusier, who has been in contact with Perret since 1908, published the famous model of the Maison Dom-ino in 1914. In this project, Le Corbusier uses the new Hennebique-type frame system taking the first step towards the independence of the structural grid from the non-loadbearing facade of the building. Such a structural system is one of the main assumption for Ville Savoye. In this building, contrary to Perret's work, the structural system is deprived of his formal qualities and

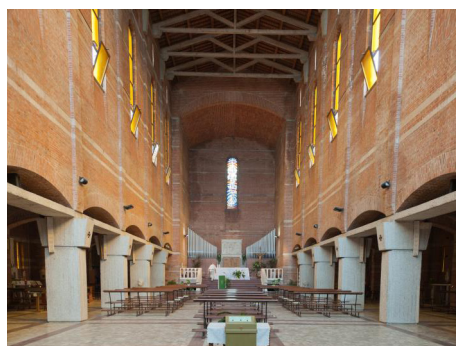
reduced to a simple grid in which the beams are hidden inside the slab so to generate a *non-tectonic* and, ultimately anorexic, effect. The frame system replaces the component and enables the adoption of low-quality materials with poor loadbearing characteristics. Le Corbusier's and Perret's visions about different ways of conceiving architecture (particularly in relation to classicism) clashed in a controversy in 1930 when they had a debate about the proper shape for the window. On the one hand, the fat architecture of Perret's trilitic system uses vertical windows, on the other hand Le Corbusier's structural grid, needs a conceptual horizontality that was not possible before: the ribbon window.⁴

2. Mangiarotti, Morassutti and Favini's *Mater Misericordia*, 1957 vs Saverio Muratori's *San Giovanni al Gatano*, 1956.

The independence of the facade from the structure against the traditional masonry represents the main difference between Mater Misericordia Church in Baranzate, Milan, and San Giovanni al Gatano in Pisa. In Mangiarotti's, Morassutti's and Favini's church, built in the sixties, the technical component is elevated to a new poetic dimension thanks to the adoption of new prefabrication techniques that were at the time freeing standardized and oppressive industrial production.⁵ This building was the first of a series of work that adopted new industrial possibilities in Northern Italy, building a variation of the previously mentioned trilitic construction. Four pillars and two beams support six longitudinal beams composed of pre-cast pieces assembled in post-tension. The shape



F



G

E



D Musée National des Travaux Publics, Auguste Perret. © Emilio Mossa

E Ville Savoye, Le Corbusier. Ph. scarletgreen

F Mater Misericordiae Church, Angelo Mangiarotti, Bruno Morassutti, and Aldo Favini. Ph. Friedrichstrasse

G San Giovanni al Gatano, Saverio Muratori. Ph. Jacqueline Poggi

H The construction of The Feltrinelli Building. © Emilio Mossa

I The construction of The Hadid Tower. © Emilio Mossa



6. Regarding the Mater Misericordia Church, the cladding is composed of a double glass, containing polystyrene, a new and innovative material at that time, with insulating and sun screening functions.

7. The deep contrast between industrialization and tradition in these two buildings demonstrates that the same religious theme can turn into architecture with different materials and structures, bearers of opposite cultural meanings even if geographically close.

of the beams component is a variable X section, defined by the variation of the bending moment that inverts in the supports. In these anorexic concept, the structural system renounces the monolithic conception of the contemporary society, introduced by Joseph Paxton's *Crystal Palace* for the Great Exhibition in 1851 in London. The structural independence of the building defines also the importance of the cladding that, released from his loadbearing function, gets back to its primordial filigree condition.⁶

On the contrary, San Giovanni al Gatano Church follows the Tuscan tradition, in which the masonry construction is both the ornament and the structure of the building. The use of traditional materials together with the constructive system of loadbearing walls defines necessarily the massive/fat character of the building.

Regarding the interiors, the loadbearing concrete pillars bears the above wall's load to the ground with a system of connected capital and lintel.⁷

3. Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron's *Feltrinelli* vs SANAA's *Bocconi*.

The new projects for Feltrinelli editor by Herzog & De Meuron and Campus Bocconi by Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, both in Milan, represent Wright's contemporary structural dualism: they highlight the contrast between the trilitic structure brought to the exterior and the extremism of the Dom-Ino system, mentioned before. Feltrinelli building, in the area of Porta Volta, is a long and tight body, composed by the reiteration of the same span following the shape of the project lot. This structure is composed of concrete pre-cast pieces, assembled

on site in less than a year.

Campus Bocconi, as all the last projects of SANAA Studio, revisits the Japanese concept of the filigree construction, employing a metallic tubular pillar, in which the hold structural grid is the compositional answer to the possible maximum reduction of the pillar's resistant section.

The multitude of construction experiences grown in contemporary architecture worldwide, together with the examples of the past mentioned before, gives the possibility of a reflection regarding the relation *shape-component* in the contemporary architectural production.

Today, the implementation speed of construction represents the new way to conceive it in a fluid continuum between composition, structure and materials. Thanks to the use of new 3D softwares, it is possible to generate, starting from the desired shape, structural estimates and prototyping materials to be assembled on site.

For the first time, the architect has the technologic means for a simultaneous management of composition, structure and materials.

This new concept of making architecture, defines a necessary inversion in design process, where the fat and anorexic essence of architecture is no more directly defined by the components of the construction but, on the contrary, by the shape in which the components fit together.

Now, more than ever, it is crucial for the architect to understand the meaning of the form in its being fat or anorexic and that, thinking about the examples cited above, inevitably leads to the world of the past or to the future.

FAT FORMALIS ANOREXIC AUS

Valeria Moscardin

ARCHEOLOGICAL RESTORATION

1. Cesare Brandi, *Teoria del restauro. Lezioni raccolte da L. Vlad Borrelli, J. Raspi Serra, G. Urbani* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e architettura, 1963). Brandi's theories were based on the studies of Gestalt Psychology and on the idea that there is a strict interaction between perceptions and experiences in the cognitive process and in the visual recognition of the world. According to Brandi's point of view, the lack in the unity of an artworks like an interruption in its figurative frame. It represents an imperfection in the group of elements put together to create the organic system of artistic subject.

2. Maria Piera Sette, *Il restauro in architettura. Quadro storico* (Torino: UTET Libreria Srl, 2001), 115-119. According to Riegl's theory, the "value of antiquity" of a monument reveals itself as an effect of the power of Nature. It is an imperfection but it is legitimated by memory and it is exalted in its continuous changes and in the irreversible process of time.

3. Paolo Marconi, *Materia e significato. La questione del restauro architettonico* (Roma: Editori Laterza, 1999).

Archaeological restoration is a design operation that blends in itself a *creative gesture* and a *critical process*. The former tries to convey a message through the lexicon of forms and structures, altered or lost in ancient monuments while the latter leads to the comprehension of the historical and artistic value of the architectonic subject and its possibility to be transmitted.

The common target is the re-composition of the potential *unity*, that allows to preserve the evocative power of monuments and the persistence of their significance over time.

The restoration of the ancient heritage has defined its methodological and technical boundaries based on the concept of "lack" (the so called "*lacuna*" in Cesare Brandi's theory). But the term does not have just the negative meaning of *absence*,¹ because it is also linked with the positive "value of antiquity," stated by Alois Riegl in his studies.²

The principal orientations of archaeological restoration are based on diametrically contrasting approaches, due to the different way to understand

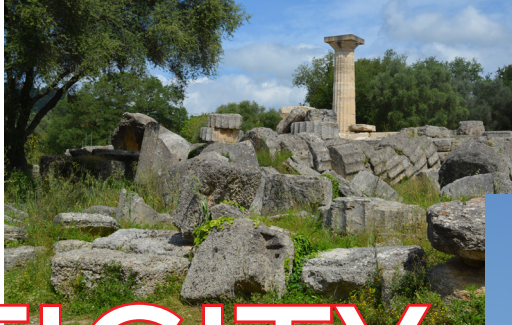
the idea of lack: on the one hand, the necessity of concealing every action of a *fat* formal re-composition; on the other, the will of revealing the *anorexic* intervention as a declared and manifest mark of newness and philological distinction.

The difference between these two points of view reflects the dichotomy between the "value of antiquity," based on the freezing of the *status quo* and focused on the celebration of the authenticity, and the "historical value," identified with the re-establishment of the formal unity.³

In its diachronic development, archaeological restoration has interchanged a maximalist approach (*fat* additions), that finds a solace in its conscious designed mark, and an *anorexic* one, in which minimalist interventions become a sort of cathartic attitude of surrender. These two antithetical theories have produced different results, based on specific critical choices of values.

In the range of interventions, the zero level is represented by the predominance of the "value of antiquity"

SM VS AUTHENTICITY: MATTER OF VALUE IN ICAL



A



B



C

The common target is the re-composition of the potential unity, that allows to preserve the evocative power of monuments and the persistence of their significance over time.

characterized by the mark made by the passing of time on the ancient materia.

The Temple of Zeus in Olympia (A) is a paradigmatic example of the prevalence of the form as a result of Nature and its action, accepted as perfect and unchangeable. The musealization of collapsed columns represents an iconic image, able to prevail over the architecture desire for structural and formal unity.

Other similar *anorexic* forms of intervention are the examples of the Temple G in Selinunte (B), the Temple of Zeus Olimpio in Agrigento (C) and the Didymaion in Mileto (D). The celebration of *status quo* becomes a pathological persistence in preserving the ruins and the idea of the sublime. In the last case, arches set to support the drums, down on the ground, are similar to skinny crutches that represent a weak attempt to maintain the performativity of vertical elements, freezing the fall happened in a specific moment in past.

These *anorexic* measures often act with an architectural code completely different from the ancient subject, paradoxically turning themselves into *over-weight* interventions and

producing a loss of formal and stylistic coherence. Many restorations made during the first decade of twentieth century, especially in Roman background, could explain the evidence of these contrasting languages: bricks fixing to reconstruct some parts of stoned structures was used in granite supports of the Basilica Ulpia in Rome (E), in a segment of the porch in Pompei's Foro (F) and also in the anastylosis of the colonnade of the Temple C in Selinunte (G), made by Francesco Valenti in 1928. Here, the classical order, from the stylobate to the entablature, is totally recomposed, even if the whole architectonic image is interrupted by a *syncope* of modern bricks in the continuity of ancient marble material. Consequently, the collage of old fragments and new elements enables the renewing of the semantic significance of architecture, maintaining authenticity but interrupting material, formal and structural continuity of the ancient monument.

On the opposite side, as a *fat* declination, the choice of highlighting the architectural form compromises the genuineness of antiquity. The will

4. In particular, most of buildings in Leptis Magna and Sabrathawas excavated by Italian archaeologists during Mussolini's dictatorship. Simultaneously, they provided also restorations and anastylosis of those monuments, sometimes using unconventional methods, in order to quicken the operations and to convey the message of Rome's greatness, enlarging the political consensus of the mass.

5. In this case, *fat* operations could be justified considering a wider matter that involves the valorization of an entire urban system, in which every monumental building, with its singularity, contribute to the organic reading of the past and its memory. Also the reconstruction of Stoa of Attalos in Athenian agora, made by American archaeologists in the middle of 1950s, could be seen through the same point of view (the hidden target was a political justification, to express thankfulness towards Americans and their role in the Second World War). It was a heavy operation because the archaeological scenery of the modern city was upset and a completely new building was re-created using only a little part of the original blocks.

6. Stefano Gizzi, "Restauro brutalisti in aree archeologiche: problematiche di conservazione," *Arte Architettura Ambiente, Rivista dell'Ordine degli Architetti, Pianificatori, Paesaggisti e Conservatori di Cagliari e Provincia* 8 (September 2004): 28-29.

7. Francesco Tomasello, "L'anastilosi," in Giovanni Carbonara, Donatella Fiorani, Francesco Tomasello, and Nicholas Stanley-Price, *Restauro e conservazione. Il sito archeologico* (2002). <http://www.treccani.it>

8. Ambrogio Annoni, *Scienza ed arte del restauro architettonico. Idee ed esempi* (Milano: Edizioni Artistiche Framar, 1946), 11-14.

of recreating the shape of ancient monuments became a way to upset the static nature of buildings. Iron beams were hidden in entablature and concrete supports were concealed in ancient columns, in order to improve static response, altering the structural logic of old constructions. This dangerous habit compromised the authenticity of many monuments of Acropolis in Athens (H), promoting only their form and damaging their material substance. Similar operations were also led by Italian restorations in Dodecanese during the beginning of twentieth century. In all of these cases, current de-restoration programs aim to remove steel reinforcement bars, used in the past, that have provoked irreversible damages. In Lindos (Rhodes), for instance, recent de-restorations, based on a scientific method of anastylosis, have tried to recover compromised monuments, but the quantity of new material has overtaken the original one, producing a false image of the Antiquity (I).

Also in Tripolitania, starting from the second Italian occupation in 1922, the studies of ancient monuments became an opportunity to apply heavy operations only to rebuild the image of Roman Empire in order to support propagandistic program of the regime.⁴ A clear example of that is the Theatre of Sabratha (L), restored thanks to the reassembly of the remaining elements, replenished by new inlays in an evocative intervention. The course of time that destroyed the monument is overtaken by the re-composition of an intelligible form. The architectonic value was predominant, also to improve the comprehension of urban structure of the ancient city.⁵ As a result, the identity of the monument itself was misrepresented: the original substance was adulterated, but the meaning of historical value was rescued.

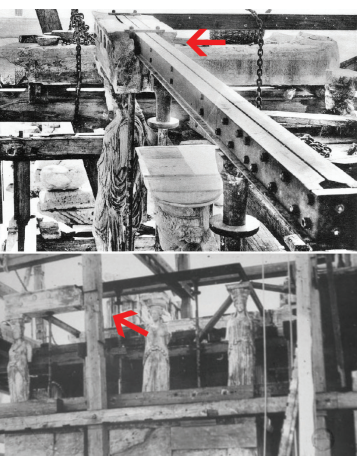
A high grade of intervention is also visible in some recent experimental restoration. Among all, the case of Crypta Balbi in Rome is quite exemplifying. Despite the stylized form and the simplification of the mass (thanks to the use of a space frame made by skinny metal tube), the

project could be seen as an *anorexic* choice that conveys a *fat* presence, compromising the authenticity of the ancient surviving elements.

Another example of the conceptually extreme level in the range of intervention is the experiences made by "brutalist" restorations⁶ The re-assembly of the original fragments—reinforced with concrete supports—consciously subvert all the structural axialities and the real formal proportions, creating a sort of "indirect anastylosis."⁷ More similar to an artistic installation and far from scientific operations of restoration, Anton Bammer's works (M) were strongly influenced by the experimentation in visual arts, borrowing the style from James Stirling's brutalist architectures. However, in these experiences, it could be seen a clear caustic aim of moral complaint about the actions on the *inviolable* antiquity, focused to stigmatize the "historical untruth" and to make fully recognizable the new actions among the original ancient ruins.

All of these examples show great contradictions: is the minimalist intervention truly a gaunt submissiveness to the incontrovertible legitimacy of History? And, on the contrary, should the *fat* reinstatement be considered only as an imperfection that compromise the ancient authenticity?

Minimalist approach and the maximalist one are two insane attempts to act on the ancient materia and on its meaning. The debate, spreading from the half of past century, is still open (N) and focuses on the nature of restoration itself: it is an unresolved dialectic between the conscious human actions—as a result of history and its events—and the natural forces. Every intervention on ancient topics should represent an ideal balance⁸ between *anorexic* and *over-weight* tendencies in order to *cure* ideological perversions of authenticity and aesthetic pathologies and in order to preserve, with the syncretic gesture of design, the expressive potentiality of our past.





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I

- A The ruins of the Temple of Zeus in Olympia as an example of the predominance of the action of Nature over the formal unity of the monumental building. Ph. F. Gotta, 2014
- B The remains of the Temple G in Selinunte. Ph. F. Gotta, 2014
- C The Temple of Zeus Olimpio in Agrigento and the celebration of the status quo condition and the denial of the intelligible form of architectonic elements. Ph. F. Gotta, 2014
- D The Didymaion in Mileto with the thin arches set to support the drums laid down on the ground. Ph. F. Gotta, 2014
- E The Basilica Ulpia in Rome and the use of contrasting formal languages between original elements (stoned surviving columns) and restored parts (brick inlays) in the anastylosis of the colonnade
- F In Pompei's Foro the collage of old drums and new brick inserts is meant to recompose the semantic significance of architecture in its formal and structural image of unity
- G The Temple C in Selinunte was completely rebuilt thanks to a philological method of anastylosis, mixing modern bricks with the original elements and creating a syncope in the continuity of ancient marble material
- H The restoration of the Erechtheion in the Acropolis of Athens (1902-1909) made by Nicolas Balanos with heavy metal reinforces, cutting and removing a large part of the original materia of the ancient members and altering the massive structural behavior (re-elaborated images, prof. Gizzi's lecture at the School for Environmental and Architectural Heritage, Polytechnic of Bari, 19.06.2014, "Problemi di consolidamento nel restauro archeologico")
- I Temples in the acropolis of Lindos (Rhodes) have a completely new image: current de-restoration have tried to recover the formal unity, despite of the loss of a large amount of the ancient materia due to the heavy operations made in the past by Italians
- L The Crypta Balbi in Rome and its evocative restoration in which anorexic choice paradoxically conveys the fat presence of new supports. Ph. Valeria Moscardin, 2010
- M The Monument to Memmio in Efeso is an example of "brutalist" restoration
- N The recent artwork made by Edoardo Tresoldi for the early Christian Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Siponto is an evocative restoration, in which the lightness of metallic grid turns into a strong and total reconstruction. Ph. Valeria Moscardin, 2016

An interview by **Andrea Anselmo and Chiara Federico**
Proofreading **Alex Davidson**

Irma Boom

The architect of the boo

Irma Boom is widely recognised as one of the world's foremost book designers. She is well known for her wide range of productions that counts over 300 books, some of which are part of the permanent collection of Museum of Modern Art in New York and other museum like Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Her love for art and architecture brought her to work extensively with artists and architects. Boom collaborates with OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture) for which she designed for example Project Japan and the 15 books of Elements, published for the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale in 2014. Her designs are conceptual and experimental. This interview focuses on these topics with special regard to the importance of dimension in her design.



YOU ARE VERY WELL KNOWN FOR DESIGNING PARTICULARLY LARGE BOOKS ALONG WITH VERY SMALL ONES. DOES SIZE PLAY A BIG ROLE IN YOUR DESIGN APPROACH? DOES IT RELATE WITH THE DESIGN CONCEPT? AND IF SO, HOW?



Irma Boom, SHV Think Book 1996-1996 (1996)

The smallest book I have made is called Irma Boom: Biography in Books. Making books for me is also building books; like architecture it has to do with dimension, scale, proportion, size, and in my case weight. It's all very important, like in my fat book SHV Think Book 1996-1996. This came out half a year later than SMLXL and it was precisely through these big books that Rem Koolhaas and I met. A mutual friend introduced us because of we both made fat books.

The size of that book was very important and in particular its thickness, largely because it came about during a time period ranging from before the computer, to after; from analogue to digital.

When Johan Pijnappel and I obtained a 5 year long commission we thought we could perhaps do a CD-ROM – DVD didn't exist at that time – but that very soon would become out-dated. Doing research we realised how fast information technology was progressing, so we came to the conclusion that it was better to make a book instead of something digital. In 1991 the Internet was on the rise, and not everybody had a computer yet. For this reason we thought it could be interesting to make a book based on the notion of the internet and the idea of browsing. So, through a three and a half year long research, we produced the content and we organised it following the non-linear structure of the Internet. The fact that the 2136 page book has no page numbers, is crucial. There is no specific beginning or end to the book, you can start reading everywhere. It is a book where if you are looking for something, you will find something else, which is for us much more interesting.



Irma Boom Biography in books (2010)

AND WHAT ABOUT THE TINY BOOK YOU MADE?

When I make a book, I first make it in its actual size and then in the process, to test it, I make reduced size books for myself as a working tool. In Amsterdam for my exhibition everybody wanted me to make a catalogue but, as I didn't want to make a big book about my own work, I decided to make a book as one of my models: small. So that idea for the publication comes from this idea. It contains an almost complete overview of my work. I decided that every year it would grow by 3% even if I don't publish anything. It is exciting, the idea that when the book becomes bigger more experiences are made. All the time getting better hopefully... and when I am 80 years old I have finally a big book!

A non exhaustive collection of Books designed by Irma Boom



THE ISSUE OF DIMENSION AND QUANTITY SEEMS TO APPEAR IN YOUR WORK ALSO IN TERMS OF THE BALANCE BETWEEN TEXT AND IMAGES, THE AMOUNT OF BLACK AND WHITE, OR COLOUR REPRESENTATIONS AND FONT SIZE. WHEN TAKING DECISIONS ON THESE MATTERS, HOW DO YOU FIND A BALANCE BETWEEN YOUR OWN "SIGNATURE STYLE" AND THE UNIQUE DEMANDS OF A SINGLE PROJECT? IN SOME CASES WE CAN AFFIRM THAT WHAT MAKES A SINGLE PROJECT GREAT IS A PROGRAMMATIC UNBALANCE. IN OTHER WORDS, SOMETIMES, EITHER FAT OR ANOREXIC WINS.

I don't consider myself as a great designer, I was trained as a painter, something completely different – it is only in the last years of school that I studied graphic design – and book design is for me somehow like architecture: you must elaborate a good concept, a good idea, and when you find it you have to execute it strictly, no compromises. The content sometimes has to be created by myself, or other times in collaboration with the commissioner (I never say client, because I am commissioned to make a work). All my work is very structured, maybe that's all to avoid showing that I'm not a good designer...

YOU SET UP YOUR OWN RULES...

Yes, that's what I do and as a graphic designer and book maker it is very important for me to have a clear idea and make rules for my self; and I follow these very strictly. I really need to set the guidelines, because otherwise I think the outcome becomes arbitrary, I want to focus on one idea.

IN WHICH WAYS WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOUR WORKS ARE CONSIDERED "OBJECTS"?

That is a word that other people use but I don't use it often, for me they are books. It could sound so superficial but for me the book is a three dimensional piece, and I think it's really more important to talk about it in these terms. It's not flat like a flat PDF, it has dimensions. A book for me is about turning the pages, making sequences, telling a story. For this reason I decide on everything, the weight, the paper, even the smell! Turning the pages is the action you take to get into the content and for this reason it's important which paper you use, what you want to achieve and which message you want to give.

..right now we are in a moment of revitalisation of the book, it becomes ever more a unique piece, precisely because of PDFs and Kindles.

NOWADAYS ELECTRONIC BOOKS ARE SPREADING AND THE PRINTED MAGAZINE INDUSTRY IS IN CRISIS. THIS COULD MEAN NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BUSINESS AND EVEN THE READERS BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, IT IMPLIES AN INCREDIBLE WEIGHT LOSS IN TERMS OF MATERIAL QUALITIES OF THE READING SUPPORT: A SORT OF ANOREXIA OF THE BOOK. DO YOU SEE THIS CHANGE AS A FORM OF DISEASE OR DO YOU TOTALLY EMBRACE THE DIGITAL DOMAIN CHALLENGES?

I think that I was very lucky that I was starting as a designer in an analogue era and I could transfer book design into digital. In this time of e-books, e-readers and all electronic devices, in contrast, I can better emphasise what I do and articulate what a book is for me, namely a paper book. So, for me it is a sort of advantage to be a book maker in this time because I can be more specific and articulated in what I am doing. I don't see any danger of book extinction because I think it is an essential part of our culture. Making or designing the book, also editing, printing and binding; it is an integral part of our existence. Therefore, it doesn't need any protection or defence, it will survive by itself and I reckon that right now we are in a moment of revitalisation of the book, it becomes ever more a unique piece, precisely because of PDFs and Kindles. I believe that we are now experiencing the Renaissance of the book.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR PAPER FROM?

From Dutch, Italian or German paper companies but I have also my own paper, IBO ONE, which is in a way similar to architecture paper. For me it has some beautiful qualities, such as its translucence. This kind of paper used to be used by architects, but at some point went out of production. So, last year, a paper company asked me if I wanted to have my own paper and then I thought, "well, I want to bring back the architecture paper". At the moment we are using it for the next insert in the magazine Volume "The Architecture of UN Peacekeeping Missions" for Architecture Biennale in Venice.

MAYBE THE AMOUNT OF BOOKS IS GETTING SMALLER BUT YOU SAY IT IS A GOOD THING FOR THE BOOK ANYWAY...

Yes exactly, I think it's really good that a lot of information and content are on internet. No need to make from everything subject a book. At the same time everyone wants to have a book and sometimes it's not worth it. So, I tell them, please put it online. If you really want to make a physical book that costs a lot of time and paper. And if you make a book you better make the best.

DO YOU THINK A WEBSITE DESIGN COULD BE CONSIDERED AS A BOOK LAYOUT SOMEHOW?

No, I think it's something else. I am not saying that a lot of web pages look like bad book designs or bad printing matter but the website is relatively new, so in a way it had to be invented from scratch. In web design there are so many possibilities but it stays flat, so it can never have the qualities of a three dimensional book. The Internet, with its constant flux of content, can change at any moment. If you make a book, instead, you create something fixed, frozen, where you can concentrate much more on what you actually edited. They reflect two different ways of thinking; it is a completely different attitude.



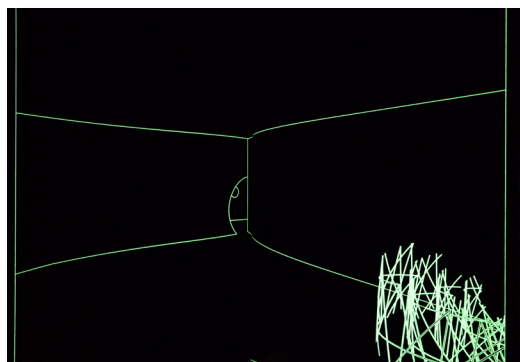
Irma Boom, Exhibition: Architecture of the book, Institut Néerlandais, Paris, 2013



Olafur Eliasson: Contact, Catalog for the artist exhibition at Fondation Louis Vuitton (Paris, 2015). Ph. © Olafur Eliasson



Full color ink picture printed on black paper Ph. © Olafur Eliasson



Installation drawing printed with fluorescent ink on black paper. Ph. © Olafur Eliasson

DESIGNING IS ALWAYS A COMPLICATED PROCESS. MANY DESIGNERS FEEL THE FEAR OF THE BLANK CANVAS. IN YOUR CASE, HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHICH DIRECTION TO TAKE IN THE BEGINNING? DO YOU HAVE ANY RECURRENT SOURCE OF REFERENCE OR INSPIRATION IN YOUR WORK?

For me it's always important to talk to the person who commissions me. Confrontation and communication are very important. I listen very carefully, because by listening I, most of the time, have immediately an idea.

I must say that, if talking to the commissioner of the project I don't have an idea immediately, it will never happen. Today, for example, I cancelled a meeting with an artist because he desperately wanted to make a book, but I felt he asked me for the wrong reason. I could feel that.

If you see my little red book you'll realise I have made many mistakes and you don't want to be one of them. For me there has to be a mutual understanding; it is not about liking or disliking the work, it is more an attitude in this mutual agreement to spend time together.

ALSO TO FIND A SHARED CONCEPT OR...

Yes, but sometimes you feel it's not going to happen; you have to follow your intuition. You know that it doesn't work and you have to stop even if the other person really wants to work together... But to protect them is better to say no. It's sometimes painful. It is important when you do something that you really listen to yourself, what your instinct tells you. It is more honest for the person you work with as well.

Last Saturday I met Olafur Eliasson to talk about a future collaboration* and I felt we were immediately on the same track, you feel there is trust and it's very reassuring. You feel complete confidence and freedom and this is what I need. These are my keywords. I really need space. If somebody is always on my back with stupid meetings and all this bureaucracy, I'm out. It doesn't matter how interesting the job is!

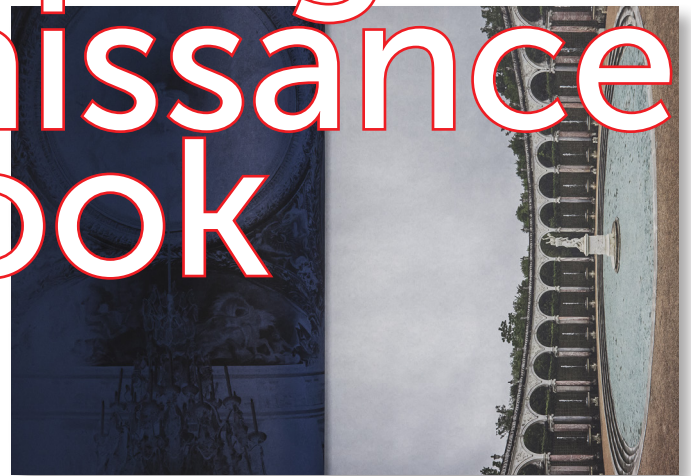
THIS FUTURE COLLABORATION WITH OLAFUR ELIASSON WILL NOT BE THE FIRST THOUGH.

No, you are right. We have worked together two other times. The first was a catalogue for his exhibition Contact at the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris. There I had the idea to make the book half black, printed in full colour, and half white, printed in black.

THE EFFECT OF PRINTED COLOUR ON BLACK PAPER IS INDEED VERY PECULIAR...

And the funny thing is that I made the book before the exhibition started, without even seeing it. The second one, instead, was the catalogue for the exhibition Verklighetsmaskiner / Reality Machines in Stockholm. So this will be the third one.

I believe that we are now experiencing the Renaissance of the book

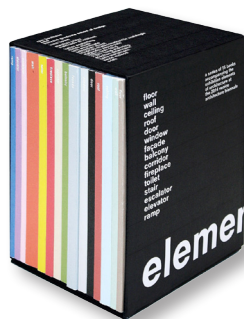


* *olafur eliasson versailles* arose from a remarkable dialogue between artist Olafur Eliasson and graphic designer Irma Boom, and accompanies the artist's summer exhibition, on view in the palace and gardens of Versailles from 5 June to 30 October 2016. The artist's book is printed on three different kinds of paper - black, grey, and white - with different colours for each paper type. Readers are invited to turn the book (some images are oriented sideways), while colour and paper combinations - Eliasson's personal Versailles photographs appear blue on black - add visual uncertainties and hesitation, making you look closer.
Ph. © Olafur Eliasson

Olafur Eliasson *Versailles*, Catalog for the artist's exhibition at the Palace of Versailles (2015)



Rem Koolhaas, AMO, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Stephan Petermann, Stephan Truby, Manfredo di Robilant, and James Westcott, ed., *Elements* (Marsilio, 2014). Courtesy of OMA



BURRASCA'S 2ND ISSUE WAS CALLED BIENNALI. FOR THE EXHIBITION "ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE" HELD AT THE 2014 VENICE ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE YOU DESIGNED 15 BOOKS CALLED "ELEMENTS". THESE CAME FROM COLLABORATIONS WITH SEVERAL ACTORS: THE AUTHORS (REM KOOLHAAS, STEPHAN PETERMANN, STEPHAN TRÜBY, MANFREDO DI ROBILANT), THE EDITOR (JAMES WESTCOTT) AND HARVARD ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS. HOW DID YOU EXCHANGE INFORMATION WITH OMA, M. D. ROBILANT (WHICH WAS AN OMA EXTERNAL COLLABORATOR) AND HARVARD STUDENTS? COULD YOU EXPLAIN TO US HOW THIS COLLABORATION WORKED OUT?

Basically we were making a more than 200 pages book in a very short time! It was complicated, but what I liked about it was the spirit; it was a collaborative effort, as making books always should be. So, they worked a lot in InDesign but, in terms of the layout, designing pages, it did not work. At some point I said to Rem, "I have to give them a structure, a grid". I made a set of rules, an extremely simple grid (only two typefaces: book and heavy) but nevertheless, because of the huge amount of content and people, it turned into chaos. This chaos was also what we needed...

At that point I thought, "let's embrace the mess and work with it". I set up a structure composed by content layers. The first one was a black and white pdf with the content the students researched, and the second layer Rem and I highlighted a sort of navigation, how to read the content, with a spot colour. In the end you see the layers and the content is revealed. Was a lot of fun to do and as said it work as navigation through the 200 pages!

Somehow the chaos stayed intact; it makes all the work very beautiful and exciting. So, in the end, the way the students worked was very effective and challenging: what they created was very important for the design of the books.

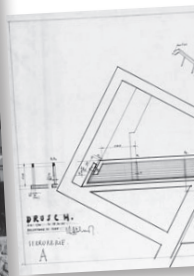
Every book has different collaborators but all together they compose a single publication; this is a new way of making a book. It was complicated but so much fun at the same time. What I loved about it is the enormous amount of information. It is fantastic because it doesn't happen so much anymore books have so much information. I learned a lot, it was really exciting.

PAGE 50

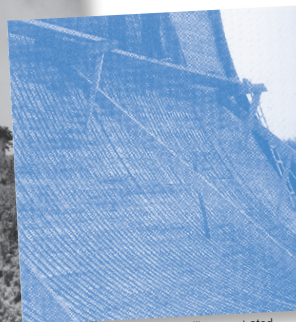
RAMP



1963 Maison Drusch, the first "topled" design, photographed by philosopher Paul Virilio, who is highly impressed and wants to collaborate with OMA.



1963 Maison Bordeaux le Pecq, in Bois le Roy, a village in Normandy. Its sloping pagoda-like roof is a prelude to Parent's "fonction oblique" theory.



for the moment still concentrated

A book for me is about turning the pages, making sequences, telling a story. For this reason I decide on everything, the weight, the paper, even the smell!

BESIDES THIS, YOU DESIGNED OTHER PUBLICATIONS WITH OMA - FOR EXAMPLE PROJECT JAPAN. AS THE AMOUNT OF THE INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED WAS HUGE, HOW DID YOU MANAGE THE SELECTION OF THE MATERIAL, THE LENGTH OF THE BOOK, THE SIZE OF IT? DID YOU HAVE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE EDITOR ON THE FINAL FORM OF THE BOOK?

Project Japan was very intense process of a year with Rem, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Kayoko Ota, James Westcott and myself. I was actually the third person they had chosen to work on this project. The first choice was a designer from the same period, a modernist, which was an interesting idea but they couldn't handle the quantity of materials and the way that OMA works, so it didn't work out in the end. Then they tried to do it with in-house designers but that also didn't succeed. Then I was asked. What I did was what I am always doing: create a concept. I'm a really structured person, making structured designs is the only thing I can do. To make the book workable I cut the book in pieces. For each architect I made a booklet. This worked because there was so much information to handle and by cutting it into pieces it became something comprehensive. It required many meetings with Rem. He lives very close to my office and that helped us to have short, but very effective, meetings quite often to move fast in designing the book.

I strive for perfection but I never get there... The imperfection makes the design human.



Rem Koolhaas, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and Kayoko Ota, ed.,
Project Japan (Taschen, 2011). Courtesy of IBO

IN MARCH YOU FINISHED REDESIGNING THE MAGAZINE VOLUME THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DESIGNING FOR SEVERAL YEARS. WHAT CHANGED IN THE NEW VOLUME? CAN THE CONCEPTION OF A MAGAZINE BE COMPARED WITH THE ONE OF A BOOK?

You cannot compare it to the design of a book. A book is something completely different.

Volume is a very dense magazine, there is a lot of information, but we could never go over 160 pages. As a potential reader, user and architecture lover, I really wanted to make it readable. So I asked the editors: "can you write less, so we can make the text bigger?"

You really have to be more generous with your content - more subheadings, book quotes, more diversity. We wanted to make it more attractive to read, there was so much text and not such many images, so we concentrated more attention on the illustrated elements. My assistant Julia Neller did a great job on new image essays for example. For me, at some point, it was very necessary to open it up - bigger font sizes, more white spaces, more images - in order to make it attractive to read.

AND HOW IMPORTANT IS THE COVER IN THIS REGARD?

For Volume I have been designing almost all covers (not so much the C lab ones). In the past few years we have designed typographic ones, which I like best. For its renewal we will still have to work a bit on it but I am convinced that what is important to sell a magazine is to conceive an interesting one.

WHAT CAN CHANGE IN A MAGAZINE AND WHAT SHOULD STAY THE SAME?

For every issue we always change certain ingredients, an image treatment, sometimes printing only in black and white. Small things can always change but the masthead should always stay the same.

IN A RECENT INTERVIEW, YOU DEFINED YOUR PUBLICATIONS USING THE WORD "ROUGHNESS". DOES THE LACK OF RATIONALITY OR VERY STRICT GRID-BASED DESIGNS HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON WITH YOUR PAST AS A PAINTER?

Many people say that what I do is perfect. I strive for perfection but I never get there; I don't mind, anyway it's a wish, it is something you should aim for. Everything I do follows an idea but it is exactly because of this very strict idea that you are allowed to do something else sometimes. When you set a rule it means that you can do it a little bit different, and this is what I like. Even if the printing isn't great I don't care so much – of course it depends for which book and which project. Everything is different and every book is specific. So roughness, the imperfection makes the design human. Perfection is a goal, maybe when I will be hundred years old I will reach perfection but not now.



Covers of Volume #45: Learning and Volume #47: The System*

Making books for me is also building books; like architecture it has to do with dimension, scale, proportion, size, and in my case weight.



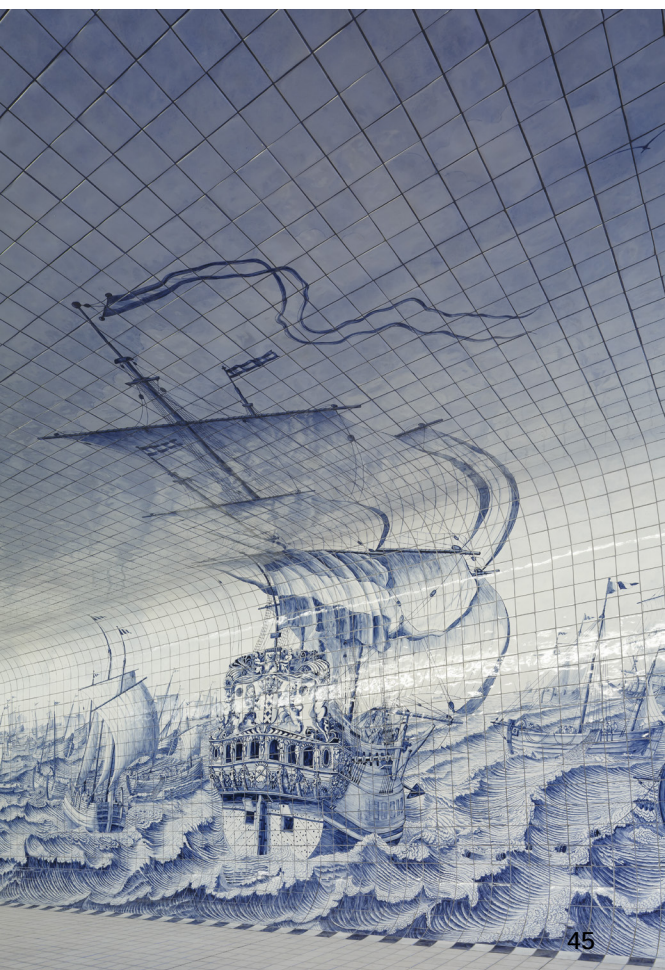
YOUR LAST PIECE OF WORK HAS BEEN A HAND PAINTED CERAMIC TILED MURAL FOR THE CUYPERSPASSAGE THAT RUNS UNDER AMSTERDAM CENTRAL STATION...

The design is actually from 2009 but it just opened. At the beginning they wanted me to design a 30 centimetre high strip. I tried, but it didn't look great. One day though I was sitting at the Royal Tichelaar Company in Makkum and I was looking at one of their hand-painted ceramic cups, suddenly I thought to apply the same material to that tunnel. At that time I worked for the Rijksmuseum for which Tichelaar had just restored an a 17th century tableau (ceramic tile piece). I decided to use ceramic tiles with that image all over the walls. When I presented that idea people were shocked I wanted to use the 13 x 13 cm tiles, but I told them go to Moscow, Paris, London or New York; everybody use small tiles for their stations.

THIS PIECE OF ART IS QUITE DIFFERENT TO ANYTHING YOU HAVE DESIGNED SO FAR. WITH THIS IN MIND, WHAT SORT OF PROJECTS COULD WE EXPECT FROM YOU IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Actually it is not the only one. I've made a curtain for the United Nations headquarters, stamps, coins, textiles... We have worked a lot in exhibitions as well. Someone lately suggested that I should make a movie. I think a movie in the end is like a book, it is a narrative. Then I thought... No!

But still I think it is good for people propose things like that to me... maybe... in the future. Who knows?



Cuyperspassage. Handmade ceramic tiles wall designed by Irma Boom, Architecture by Benthem Crouwel, Amsterdam, 2016

It is a book
where if
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looking for
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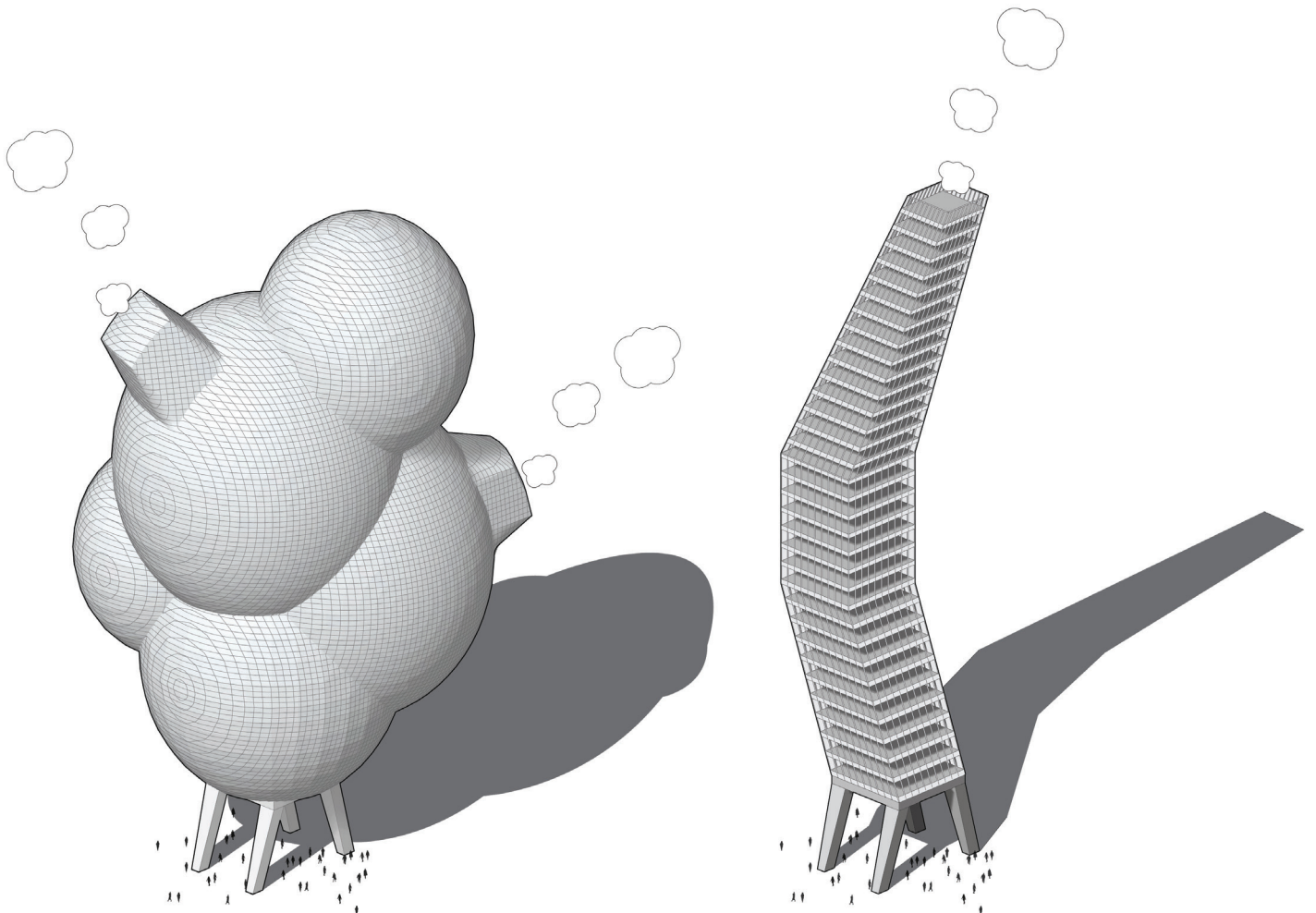
skinny/FAT

Frank Gossage

The dualities of being thin or fat have certain connotations imbued within one another; if one is thin then you are in good shape, eat healthy, exercise; but if you are on the other end of the spectrum then you're out of control and slovenly.

An in between is skinny-fat, a colloquial term which essentially means one looks thin but is really just as unhealthy as someone who is overweight; the facade is a sleek mask or, at least, it is before one gets too close.

The dichotomy in the term skinny-fat allows for nimble readings of architecture: sexy exteriors vs bland interiors, high performance glazing vs. low efficiency HVAC systems, dynamic public space vs restrictive private space... These drawings of the same tower use a skinny-fat reading of the architecture by extracting what it looks like and what it really is, unveiling the ugly truth.



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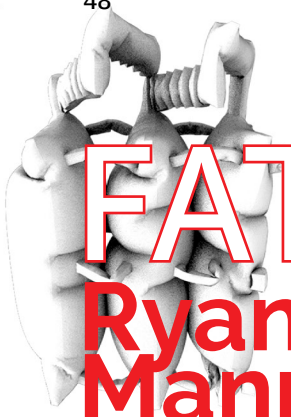
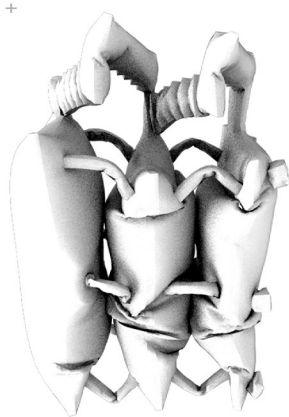
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BURRASC A

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FAT DOMINO

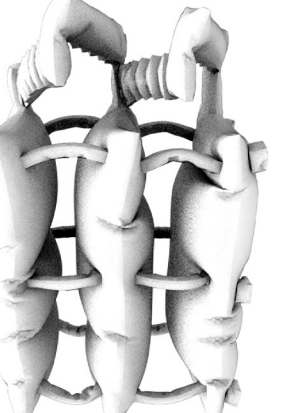
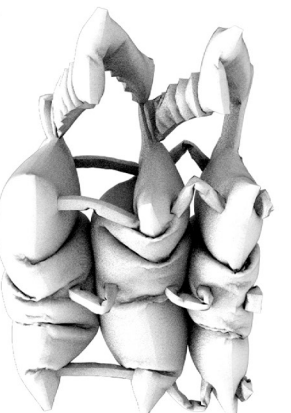
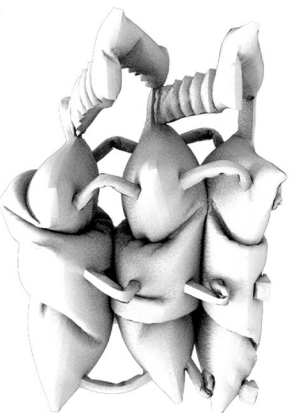
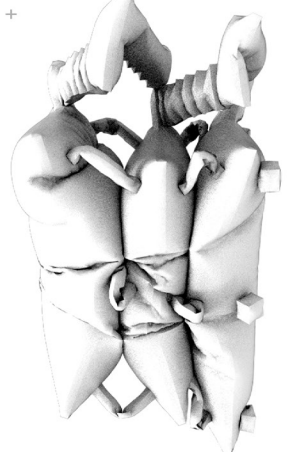
Ryan Vincent Manning

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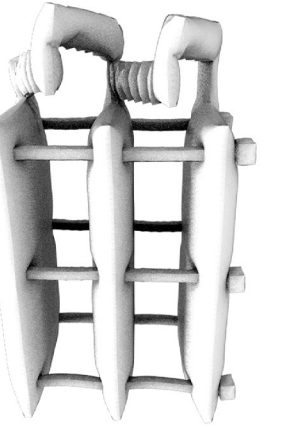
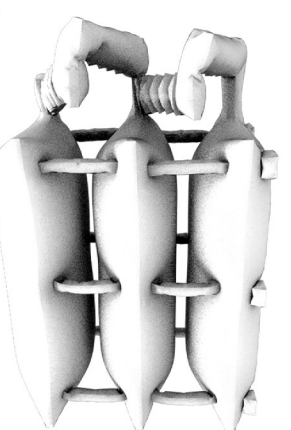
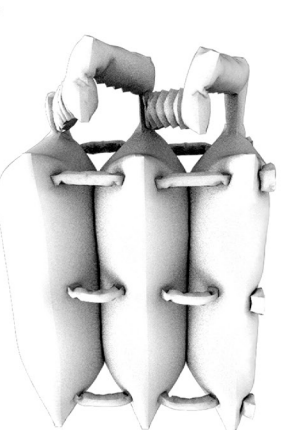
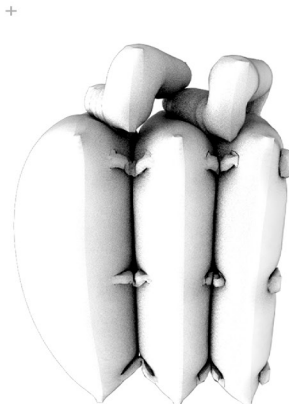


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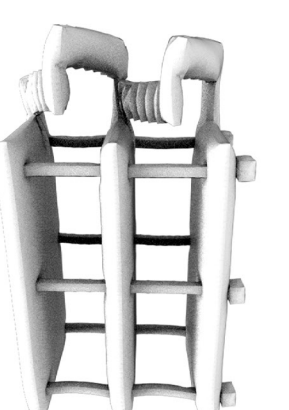
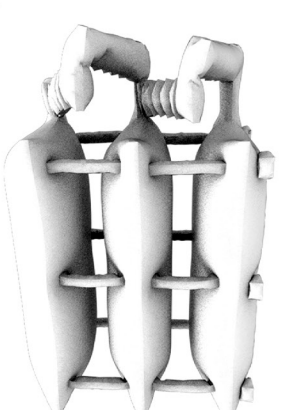
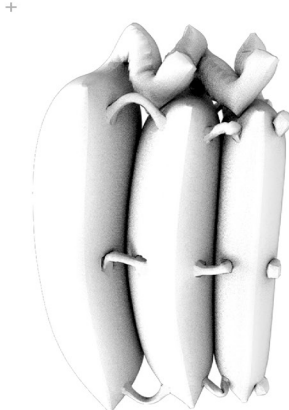


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fat domino : the series

VOLUPTUOUS AND RUBENS VERSUS THE TYRANNY OF THE SLIM.

Fat or fatness has been the point of contention for society for centuries. When hunger was rampant, the size of your gut was looked upon with desire—the beauty in the Baroque forms of skin and flesh from Bernini to Rubens. Today in modern society the slim, athlete rule fashion and the movie screen. As with society, Architecture has gone through similar transformations. Since the introduction of the International Style in the twentieth century, the modern building has become thin, slick, and high tech. Yet, unarguably, voluptuous and overweight buildings equal more space and new opportunities. I look not to a return to the old building construction, fat structures, but a change of perception to fat volumes and thin structures due to new technologies. Just as the Maison Dom-Ino,¹ *Fat Domino* looks to change your view of what is possible. Surfaces are merely skins filled with material that can be mass or void. Their construction can be made from a variety of methodology ranging from parametric paneling, prepreg resin skins, spray concrete, to numerous other techniques available today.² Whatever physical manifestation, this project looks to reevaluate the model and find new value where old values have been exhausted. Just as much as the domino is not only the sum of its parts, Slabs, columns, stairs and footings are all elements just as much as the objects they create. *Fat Domino* does not look to remove them from discussion but to challenge their reading and question their functionality through ornament, space, and structure.³

1. Le Corbusier, *Le Corbusier Et Pierre Jeanneret Oeuvre Complete 1910-1929*. Les Editions D'Architecture 1956. pp.23-26.

2. The growing amount of technologies developed since the early twentieth century comes from many different industries into Architecture. From aerospace fabric development with *Gerber Technologies* to paneling system and space frames designed and fabricated in *Dassault Systemes* to pre-preg skins developed by *North Sails*, the thin shell industry of manufacturing is continually changing the way we look at even the simplest construction.

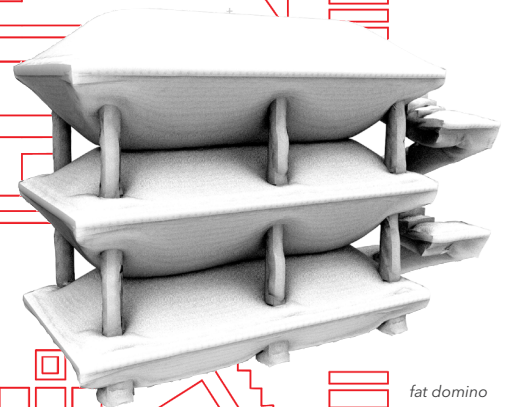
3. In the drawings, notice the complete change in perspective of each individual element. Where in one case, a column can begin to act as ornament and another case it can act as a secondary support for the skin. In the same sense, the slab changes from a floor to the interiority of the space.

The series shows a number of the iteration of the possible development and change of the individual elements and their functionality.

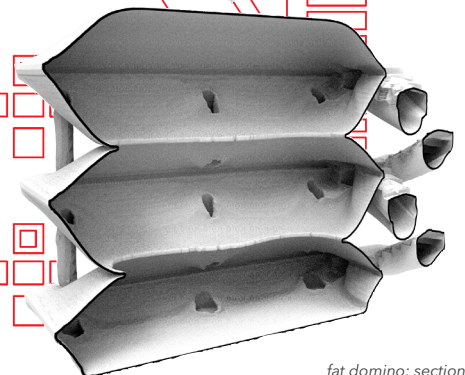
Fat Domino: unfold shows how the *Maison Domino*¹ can be flattened into skins and looked at from plan as a single drawing and represents itself as a pelt or skin for mass or void, i.e. fat.

Fat Domino, as one of the series, this image produces a repetitional effect that generates wrinkling and fat that is reminiscent of cellulite or blubber of a whale.

Fat Domino: the section displays the result of the merging of the voids created from the flattening up of the slabs. In here we can notice that even the columns and stairs now have been pushed to the point that they begin to show spatial possibilities.



fat domino



fat domino: section

fat domino: unfold

vertical threats

Mihai Rotaru





In the center of the multi-layered built landscape of Bucharest many of the constructions risen in the last few years are in a doubtful legality according to urban planning legislation.

Benefiting from weak and ambiguous laws, the investors manifest their power and influence and find ways to impose their businesses. They seem to have the power to reshape the whole city. Due to free market expansion, most of the new buildings are private investments. Profit oriented constructions exceeds their dimensions imposed by the urban planning legislation filling the city with exceptions that can establish new rules.

The new facades become a threatening background screen for the old and small existing buildings. The glass and metal panels clash against the old brick walls of the houses making the new constructions seem like cutouts from other places.





The morality of diseases

Fabiano Micocci

in Greek Architecture

1. <http://piigs.net/>

2. This definition belongs to the expression "to eat like a pig" from the English Dictionary.

3. The Pasok is a Socialist party that, in alternation with the centre right New Democracy, ruled in Greece since the birth of the Republic in 1976.

4. James Angelos, *The Full Catastrophe: Inside The Greek Crisis* (New York: Crown, 2015), 49-51.

5. Greg Palast, "My Big Fat Greek Minister," *Greg Palast Journalism and Film* (20 May 2013). <http://www.gregpalast.com/my-big-fat-greek-minister/>

6. Orestis Doumanis, "An introduction to Post-War Greek Architecture," in *Landscapes of Modernization. Greek Architecture 1960s and 1990s*, Yannis Aesopos and Yorgos Simeoforidis (Athens: Metropolis Press, 1999), 284.

THE EPOCH OF BULIMIA

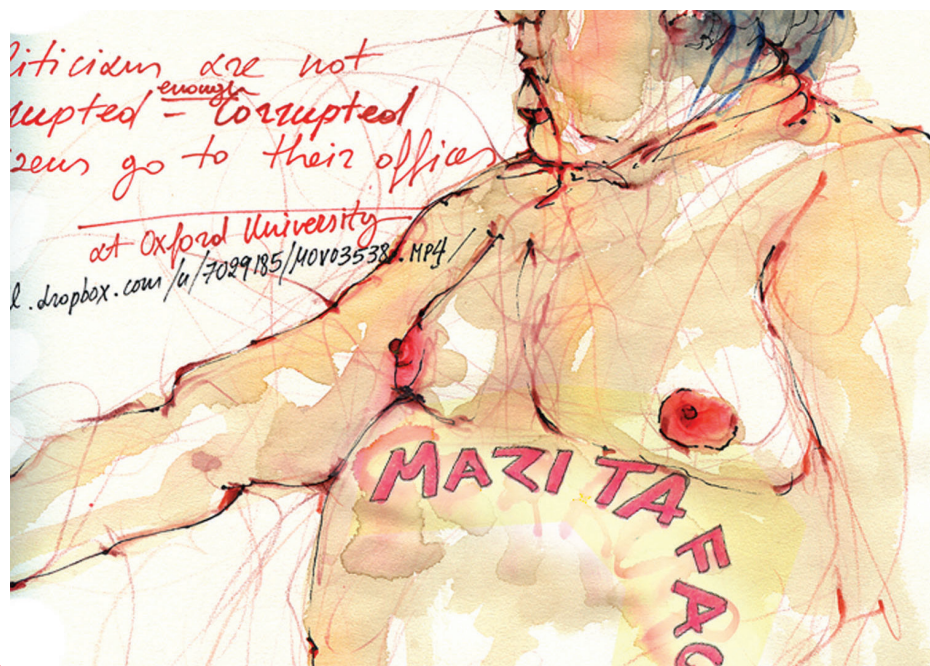
The rhetoric of fatness has been referred to Greece since the 1990s when the term *PIIGS* was coined to describe countries—Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain—which governments were not able to refinance their fat debt.¹ The debt is a consequence of an altered metabolism provoked by abundance and excess in consuming under the pressure of desire in the capitalistic society. Greece, victim of the rush of modernization, was accused of eating more than what was actually producing, and therefore Greeks to live above their means. If *PIIGS* is an acronym, it quickly acquired a derogatory meaning: the greedy Greece, with its companions, was to be blamed "to eat a lot, noisily and unpleasantly" as pigs do.²

After the 2000s, and during the years of the economic crisis, the expression "to eat" has been widely used in Greece too in reference to the illicit feasting on public money. The controversial book *We Ate All Together* by Theodoros Pangalos, a Deputy Prime Minister in 2010 from PASOK,³ was a confession of guilt for having eaten a lot during the previous decades and a self-

admission of the actual condition of obesity. Pangalos tried to involve voters in the Politicians' feast accusing both politicians and citizens of having eaten money and having sinned together.⁴ By spreading the disease to every single Greek citizen, Pangalos made the victims of the scam as guilty as the victimizer, avoiding addressing responsibilities to hide the reason of such dysfunctionality. By coincidence, Theodoros Pangalos is a rounded and fat man which weight cannot be ignored.⁵

Since the end of WWII, Greek cities grew up fast and quick. The building sector, the main economic drive of the country, was based on an incessant production of apartment buildings that allowed the accumulation of fat-capital in form of concrete buildings and private property. The exceptional building activity made architects not having "the opportunity to work without considering the profit motive and even assume the pecuniary mentality they are obliged to serve."⁶ Such tendency was the norm until the last decades when a generation of architects was working in a very high professional manner with a lot of

of Bulimia and Anorexia Architecture



A

7. Interview with Panos Dragonas, 07 April 2013.

8. Panos Dragonas, "Design Adventures in Ad-Hoc Urbanism. Mapping the Connections between Construction Industry, Real Estate and Modern Architecture in Greece", *Archithese* 04.2014 (August 2014), 74-81.

9. Alexander Tzonis, and Alcestis P. Rodi, *Greece. Modern Architecture in History* (London: Reaktion, 2013), 254

10. Alexander Tzonis, and Alcestis P. Rodi, *Greece. Modern Architecture in History* (London: Reaktion, 2013), 241, 251-53.

11. Costas Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis* (New York: Crown, 2015), 64.

12. Mark Blyth, *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 12-13.

13. Michael Hoexter, "Austerity's Irrationality: The Age of Economic Anorexia," *New Economic Perspectives* (2 January 2013). <http://neweconomicperspectives.org/2013/01/austeritys-irrationality-the-age-of-economic-anorexia.html>

14. Michael Arndt, "Architectural Anorexia," *BusinessWeek* (19 May 2010). http://www.businessweek.com/innovate/next/archives/2010/05/architectural_anorexia.html

private commissions, but without really questioning what they were doing.⁷ Architects were involved in the large bio-political transformation of the Greek society with the commodification of the design, "following the demands of a society that lived well beyond its limits."⁸

The economic bulimia provoked harsh side effects on the body of the territory, consuming "a distortional amount of the available space, economic and ecological resources"⁹ that did not produce any environmental or spiritual happiness. Architects had denied the disease throughout the years, shielding behind a conservative spirit that favors "minimalistic prismatic volumes, clean rectilinear plans, a simple palette of color," lacks of invention and fails on engaging the 10% of the population composed of homeless, poor, immigrants and refugees,¹⁰ the first victims of the disorder.

THE EPOCH OF ANOREXIA

Being fat is an accusation of guilt and immorality. Pangalos himself sent the message in 2010: "the previous twenty years were sinful and must be followed by a sense of guilt and the

appropriate penitence."¹¹ Austerity, the formula that aims to cut state's budgets, before being evaluated in its effectiveness and possibility of success, has been advertised as "the virtuous pain after the immoral party."¹² The morality issue has been addressed to align the fat sinners to elites' standards: PIIGS have been thus scolded and put on diet to reach a good shape. Austerity campaign indeed "focused on foreswearing government funding as the means of attaining an unrealistic ideal of economic perfection." But austerity has had a side effect called "economic anorexia" (*anorexia economica*):¹³ a social disorder that involves many individuals, the ones that Pangalos brought inside the feast and that to whom he asked a sacrifice. Consequence of austerity is the slow growth and recession, circumstances that make the state of anorexia permanent like Dante's V Circle of Hell, where, according to the law of retaliation, greed is punished with a constant and eternal stinky rain.

Economic anorexia afflicted architecture with a shrinking business worldwide.¹⁴ In Greece construction sector continuously decayed until



B

A Mr. Pangalos, Demi Kaia (The Carnivore), 2012. © Demi Kaia

B Golden Hall Shopping Mall

C Dreams Abandoned, Jeff Vanderpool, 2009. © Jeff Vanderpool

D No-Anorexy, Oliviero Toscani, 2007. © Oliviero Toscani



C



D

To reframe the architects' role in times of austerity, means to leave behind the deviating and reductive official morality in order to renew aesthetic values and to inspire constructive and transformative actions.

15. Panos Dragonas, "Crushed Ground - The Fragmented Territory of Austerity-Stricken Athens," *MONU* 19 (2013), 88-93.

16. William Grimes, and Isabelle Caro, "Anorexic Model, Dies at 28," *New York Times* (30 December 2010). http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/31/world/europe/31caro.html?_r=0

17. Costas Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis* (New York: Crown, 2015), 57.

18. Jeremy Till, "Scarcity contra Austerity. Designers need to know the difference," *Places Journal* (October 2012). <https://placesjournal.org/article/scarcity-contra-austerity/>

19. Thomas De Monchaux, "Why Less Isn't Always More," *The New York Times* (25 February 2012). http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/26/opinion/sunday/why-less-isnt-always-more.html?_r=0

20. Jeremy Till, "Scarcity contra Austerity. Designers need to know the difference," *Places Journal* (October 2012). <https://placesjournal.org/article/scarcity-contra-austerity/>

reaching a contraction of the 75% since the beginning of the crisis. The main consequences of anorexia results in the distortion of the body of the city and of the body of the building. Athens, which with the outburst of Olympic Games aimed to enlarge its body decentralizing many functions, shrunk because of the lack of redevelopment plans afterwards and further financing.¹⁵ What still remains after the crisis is a thin system of infrastructures, while the body of the city has been neglected as urban decay followed. A similar dysfunctionality can be diagnosed for individual buildings: the overproduction of previous years crashed against economic restrictions and left thin unfinished concrete structure, the Maison Dom-Ino's skeleton system, everywhere on the territory. These skeletons expose their shocking nudity and are immortalized through photos and reportages, similarly to the model Isabelle Caro that offered her body to be photographed by Oliviero Toscani for an Italian advertising campaign "No-Anorexia" and displayed on billboards and in newspapers.¹⁶

the territory and depleted its natural resources, and the latter excludes any chance for the body to function normally with a conviction to self-starvation. The apex of consumerism during the epoch of bulimia was characterized by a market of luxury apartments and villas, marinas and shopping malls, the same program that the haircut of austerity is feeding by attracting investments from outside through large privatization, concealing powerful systems of authority.¹⁸ As nothing changed, in 2012 Pangalos candidly admitted "We are still eating together. Economic anorexia is the consequence of the intertwined relation between austerity, a state of reduced spending, and scarcity, the condition of limited resources. To reframe the architects' role in times of austerity, means to leave behind the deviating and reductive official morality in order to renew aesthetic values¹⁹ and to inspire constructive and transformative actions.²⁰

OVERCOMING MORALITY

The epoch of bulimia and the epoch of anorexia, apparently at the antipodes, have been marked by the persistence of the cynicism of power, the dominant morality of late capitalism.¹⁷ A fake product of wealth and health has to be sold: you have to get fat to get better or you have to get thin to get better. Bulimia and anorexia are mental and physical illness that continue to afflict Greece: the first deformed the body of

Pellicola²

Andrea Piotto



Hunger and rural exodus

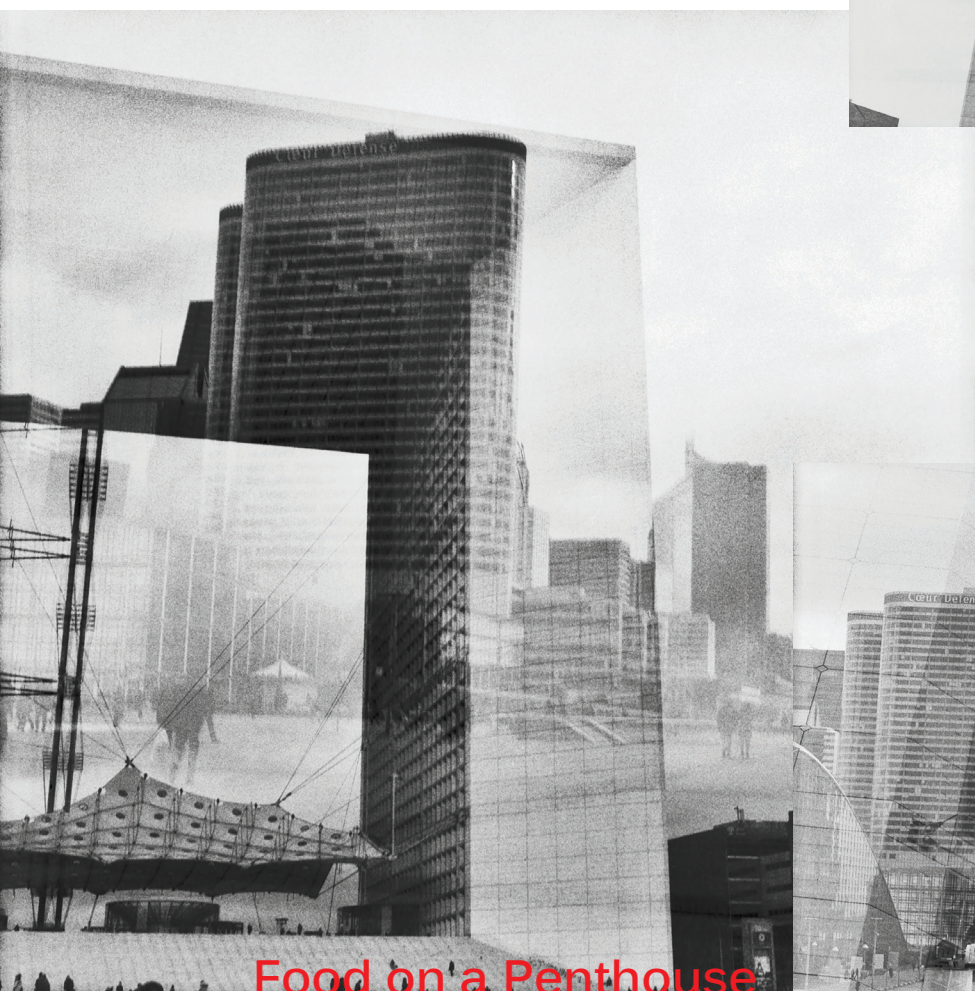
ANOREXIA



HUNGER AND URBAN SLUM _
ANOREXIA/BULIMIA

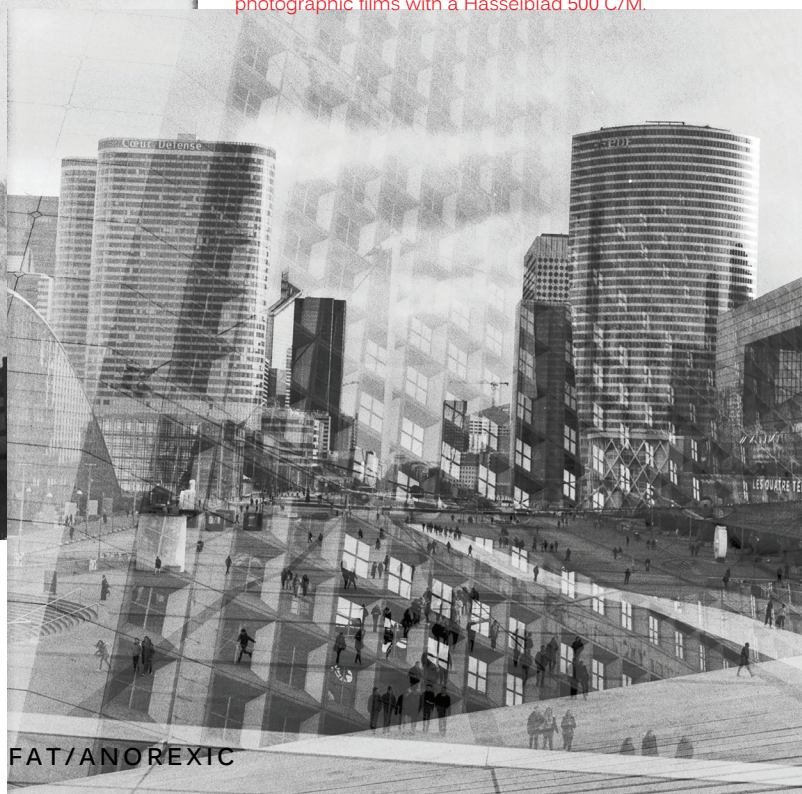


Overlays, two overlapping shots.



Food on a Penthouse
BULIMIA

Ideas, concepts, images welded on
photographic films with a Hasselblad 500 C/M.



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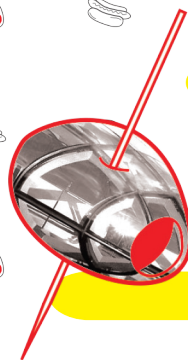
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s.f. si riferisce al vento abbastanza forte appartenente all'ottavo grado della scala di Beaufort, in grado di strappare facilmente ramoscelli dagli alberi e rendere difficoltoso camminare controvento. Nel mare la burrasca comporta onde alte. Le creste si rompono e formano spruzzi vorticosi che vengono risucchiati dal vento. La velocità del vento di una burrasca in genere varia tra i 34 e i 40 nodi (vale a dire dai 63 ai 75 km/h oppure dai 17.2 ai 20.7 m/s). L'altezza media delle onde marine in genere è di 5.5 metri.

/sto:m/ A violent disturbance of the atmosphere with strong winds and usually rain, thunder, lightning. An intense low-pressure weather system; a cyclone. A wind of force 10 on the Beaufort scale (48-55 knots or 88-102 km/h); the waves in a storm are usually about 5.5 meters high.

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