

TALK ARCHITECTURE An Introduction to theory in architecture

The essay attempts to investigate how ideas, wherever they might come from, transform our thinking about architecture and therefore transform:

the way we do things

the way we make things

the reason we do and make them that way

General Aims of the essay The objective is to discover how thought, belief and attitude interact with built form.....

This can happen in several ways

Beliefs & attitudes determine: The way we arrange things within a space

Beliefs & attitudes determine: The way we behave in a space and the way space makes us behave

Beliefs & attitudes determine: The way we arrange spaces to work together

Beliefs & attitudes determine: How we look at forms and invest them with meaning

Beliefs & attitudes determine: How we approach a design task

Beliefs & attitudes determine: How or when we use particular structures, materials, forms and signs

Purpose in architecture

If you look at architecture and its role in society you might be forgiven to see your task as complex and layered.

The purpose of architecture is manifold and would appear to be layered, sort of like an onion.

Driven by need a building is put down, pulled up and pushed out.

Its purpose is adequately defined by the Vitruvian conditions for good architecture: Stability, Utility and Delight or indeed by the 4 generators of architecture as elaborated upon by Bill Hillier: to facilitate activity, modify climate, utilise resources and to give meaning and delight.

These generators or “functions” of architecture lie at the intersection between life in general, which needs architecture to function and architecture as a function of life.

This, however, is not the place to elaborate on these generators.

Even so, when a need is fulfilled, you will have discovered that each detail, each element making up the complex programme of a building or city fabric has its purpose

and the purpose of each element determines the way that detail has been fashioned. The sum of these details then multiplies into the overall effect.

In this way architecture is made up of a myriad of purposes and strategies to answer those purposes, from the smallest into the largest, vaguest and most intangible.

The course “philosophies in architecture” tries to concentrate on vision, without wanting to trivialise or ignore the technical aspects of architecture: after all the vision, the design, can only be revealed in technology. Technology, as Heidegger put it is a revealing, a bringing to presence.

The smallest layers of the onion are the outer layer, they hold together the core...

And so, the process of architectural design slaloms between vision and technology.

Philosophy is a tool whereby we analyse our place and purpose in the world.

Our sense of place determines, or modifies our sense of purpose: what we decide to do and why we do it.

These in turn determine how we do it: at that point the four generators of architecture lock into place.

This course then explores the no-man’s land that one has to get through in order to decide how to interpret the four generators of architecture.

The purpose of that large picture is to draw a finger through the water and give direction to all the decisions that follow in its wake.

In the end the text becomes an assembly of memories, which then merge into an overall impression of what I have read.

Part I: Theory, Politics, History, Tradition

This particular introduction will attempt three things: It will ask what theory is... why it might be useful... And it will ask how theory works... But let me start with a quotation:

“theory – the attempt to decide architectural right and wrong on purely intellectual grounds – is precisely one of the roots of our mischief. Theory, I suppose, was what made the chatter on the scaffolding of the tower of Babel” From: Geoffrey Scott, *The architecture of Humanism* 1980, (1924) 259-260

I shall come back to this quotation a little later on. There are many who would agree with Scott's view. For them theory represents the verbal excrescence of self-conscious "artists". Others think theory is simply garbled language, which no-one understands...

Is there, in fact, really such a thing as a theory of architecture? And is it useful?

"Architectural Theory is no discipline, the most we can say about contemporary architectural theory is that it can be called architectural theory." Mark Linder

What a problem....

Or perhaps it isn't a problem

Maybe it is a cause for celebration.....

THERE IS NO ARCHITECTURAL THEORY!!! Hurrah!

And there was great rejoicing in the streets....

But there is, nevertheless, something that happens in our minds to make us decide to do *this* rather than *that*. What do we call that?

Let's try to visualise the process of design a a rough and ready sort of way

[design: a visualisation of issues](#)

This diagram is a simple attempt to simulate the kind of non-linear chaos that eventually orders itself into a finished product. Theory is a to-ing and fro-ing of thought and action, a bellowing of feelings and decisions that finally order themselves into a strategy. Sometimes this happens by a fortunate accident, more often through a mixture of happy accident and real vision.

Theory as decisive action A strategy is often no more than a tentative proposition. I would like to propose that theory is an existential act, a deliberate decision on our part to make sense of the world around us so as to make compelling decisions about form. Theory is an attempt to simplify and describe the chaos around us. Theory is the art of making connections.... It forges connections between desire, experience and belief. Theory forces an attitude to practice: it disciplines thought into a particular direction.

WHAT IS A DISCIPLINE? A discipline is an appeal to constraints: Constraints, that is... of prescribed ways of behaving and ordering. Of ways of separating two different fields of study

A discipline is like a channel, whereby the constraints force whatever moves into a particular direction.

What architecture wants a discipline proposes: an alignment of concerns and tasks to satisfy a particular desire. If architecture wants "an object": a building, a plan, a design, a design process,

a success... then theory simply wants a decision, a compelling decision it can defend. A decision that says: if A, we do B to get C.

The theory of theory...

Like architecture, the discipline of theory is itself necessarily divided into its theory and practice. The theory of theory would take us into abstract subjects like philosophy and the working of the mind. Let's not go there... Yet.... Let's instead stick to the relationship between theory and architecture and look at desire. That is: what we think we want on the evidence of our Experience and belief.

That mixture of ingredients: desire, experience and belief has to be translated into action:

What do we want?

Why do we want it?

How do we get it?

Theory forces an attitude to practice. By that I mean that that theory is no more than an attitude, a strongly held opinion on what needs to be done, why it needs to be done and how we are going to go about doing it. In this way you cannot help have a theory of architecture. So why is theory such a maligned subject? Why do so many people love to hate "theory"? That is because people often forget to make a necessary distinction: They confuse *the* theory of architecture with *a theory of architecture*. They may hate a particular theory of architecture, such as that of Le Corbusier, Gehry or Eisenman, or Palladio or even Hassan Fathy. They may alternatively hate the way many theorists talk. And not always without reason... There are lots of theories I do not like. I personally don't like any theory that is mean or lacks generosity towards humanity at large and humanity's place in the world: more than that: I hate the idea of being reduced to a number... Precisely because of that, I am glad that not everyone feels the way I do.... because if they did, I would be reduced to yet another number. But to say that one hates theory, is like saying you hate thinking. That would just be silly. We should not just build without thinking about what we are doing. Thinking in architecture is an essential discipline. Theory is thinking about practice And you need to practice theory to become good at it. Just like sketching.

To practice theory one has to become familiar with the instruments of critical analysis and decision making. With the use of these instruments we can use theory to forage around in what we have to find connections between the world and humanity and put them to good use in architecture.

Cunning Theory

Theory is not, as Geoffrey Scott wanted us to believe "the attempt to decide architectural right and wrong on purely intellectual grounds." Theory is far more cunning than that, far more reckless. It does not play "fair" It uses anything it can lay its hands on in any way it can. Its only criterion for failure is disappointment.

Disappointment & Theory

Disappointment in the quality of the theory. Disappointment in the quality of the design it produces. Instead of raising theory to the lofty heights of “pure intellectual reasoning” I would suggest, that in order to practice theory, you need to forage around in at least three other disciplines, the disciplines which deal with experience, love of wisdom and considered action:

HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY & POLITICS

In this way we can try to establish what we are and want to be to decide what is wise and useful, to sift the experience we have accumulated, for what is useful in it; to plan and implement an effective strategy of what to do to achieve our goals.

What is a good theory?

A good theory has clear picture of what is desirable...

A good theory has a clear idea of why it is desirable...

A good theory has a clear method to achieve its goal...

The problem is....

That a bad theory may have all of these qualities as well... It is quite possible for a bad theory to give rise to truly moving and wonderful architecture. And it is also possible for a theory to be brilliant but completely lacking in any of the four qualities I summed up just now. Does one judge a theory on its own merits as a theory, as something that possesses its own internal beauty? Or does one judge a theory purely on its effects?

The difference between good theory and bad theory may well have something to do with inclusion and exclusion. The point is that with good theory, you may know that you need to be selective in formulating the means to an end, but you will not forget that you have done that. While bad theory tends to blindly exclude everything it considers irrelevant and therefore loses that generosity that all architecture should be imbued with.

Theory is a fuzzy kind of preparation for practice. Thinking does not always transfer cleanly from the mind to the drawing board. That is not always a bad thing... However....

It is worth getting your priorities right! Design is really a kind of *political* activity. What we have to acknowledge is that a core part of theory has to do with politics. Of course politicians play an important and often dubious role in the development of urban space, but that is not exactly what I mean. An important aspect of design is political because POLITICS IS THE ART OF PRIORITISING

That is, deciding upon priorities within the chaos of conflicting desires and possibilities.

How do we justify those priorities, how do we avoid disappointment? How do we find our way in this forest of possibilities.. How does this particular idea, translate into that particular action or that particular form, treatment or arrangement?

Strangely enough the answer is: you don't know that for certain. You may believe you have found *the* method.

But do not close your mind around that one method.

There is no single all-encompassing correct and fully satisfying way of doing things. Never fall into hard edged certainty

Keep your mind open. Occasionally the politician in us likes to see him or herself as a helpless medium for a higher authority, just as the writing hands of the evangelists and prophets were said to be held by angels. It is a comforting thought. After all, it removes all responsibility from our own shoulders and allows us to blame others.

But we are not evangelists!

The priorities of design, the politics of design is difficult and traditionally tries to appeal to something outside ourselves to justify our choices.

Often that something is clothed with words such as "objectivity" "scientific method" "rational process", "logical".

These words attempt to conceal our uncertainty and allow us to put a brave face on it by referring to something supposedly firmer something called "real knowledge" except that this firmness is itself invisible and insubstantial.

It is of course important to be objective, logical, rational, authoritative and right, but what does all that really mean? In architecture as in other disciplines, it really means to establish a central point from which any excursion into thought, into our imagination and into memory departs and has to always refer back to to find its bearings.

It means writing a scenario of going to, being in and leaving a building. It is sort of like going out for a walk armed with a compass and a good map of the area. This central point allows us to always find our bearings wherever we are.

Architecture is a narrative of activity, written not one-dimensionally, like a novel, not two dimensionally like a painting, but three dimensionally, like a building.

But it does not mean that we can blame the system for what goes wrong...After all, we make the system according to our understanding of the way things work, therefore, we are fully responsible for what we believe, for what we choose to do and for what we choose to remember.

Systems are great, but they are a language of reality not reality itself.

History

History is about collecting experience with reference to the preoccupations and desires of the moment. In the retelling of experience, what we end up with necessarily becomes charged with our own desires, paradigms and preoccupations.

Let me give you the full text of what Geoffrey Scott said about theory:

“theory – the attempt to decide architectural right and wrong on purely intellectual grounds – is precisely one of the roots of our mischief. Theory, I suppose, was what made the chatter on the scaffolding of the Tower of Babel. It is the substitute of tradition..” Geoffrey Scott, *The architecture of Humanism* 1980, (1924) 259-260

That is what theory may have meant in his day, after all he wrote this when architectural thinking was being completely transformed by the Bauhaus and Le Corbusier. But despite all that, it is still a mean and ungenerous conception of what theory is about. And to retaliate with an equal measure of meanness: I am sure he would have jumped at the opportunity of designing a tower of Babel.... Theory is wrongly set apart from tradition, while history is often wrongly equated with it. Architectural theory is not a substitute for tradition. Nor is tradition a substitute for architectural theory. Tradition is a particular aspect of theory. It rehearses “that which is there.” In not letting go we can build on what there is and improve it. Alternatively, we can react passionately, revolt and destroy what is there in the belief we can do it better. Both are theoretical positions with regard to tradition. Our parent and grand parents who rebuilt the world after the two world wars believed that the world was perfectly make-able. They had an unfaltering and unlimited belief in their own ability to perfect the creation of God. That optimism, or arrogance, whatever you want to call it, is now on the wane, having brought the world to the edge of chaos we no longer feel so confident about our ability to make the world a better place. That is a pity.

Whenever tradition becomes too quiet, too self-evident... It starts deciding for us. No tradition is good enough to be applied without the conscious and explicit formulation of its purpose. Tradition is by itself no guarantee of prudent growth. We are always looking for divinities, laws and supermen to do things for us. Those very divinities have repeatedly told us -by example- that we should take full responsibility for our own actions, that we should think about what we are doing, but do we listen?

God and Science

Our conceptions of God and Science provide us with compelling models for truth. They encourage us to take full responsibility for our actions, not relinquish it. God is that infinite depth, which science and art have merely scratched. We do not know his purpose, so we are thrown into the world to fend for ourselves. Good thinking is done on the basis of a paradigm. A paradigm is an image of how our world works and how it might fit into the great scheme of things. Without a paradigm, we cannot decide what we want.

In one sense, “paradigm” is really another word for tradition; it stands for the image we have built using all that we know. But, any paradigm is provisional and awaits its execution patiently. Traditions need to be kept alive by being constantly recreated in the imagination. The fact is that the best architects, did not try to reinvent the wheel. The best architects criticised tradition, or used tradition in a critical way. That is true for Palladio, for Fathy and Bawa, for Stanigar and Foster, for Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier. Even in their efforts at destruction, the greatest modernists did not fail to acquaint themselves intimately with that which they were about to destroy.

Part II

That brings us to philosophy

Philo = love, Sophia = wisdom. Philosophy is a tool to formulate the ends we must serve, the means we have at our disposal and the language with which we represent reality and with which we mediate. It is as if we are reading poetry in another language: we hear the sound and the rhythms, but in our intoxication we cannot fathom the wealth the philosophers are throwing our way. We cannot re-create that wealth in our purpose.

I think therefore I am, René Descartes, Cogito ergo sum. Play around with the implications of that for a while.... Heidegger, a German Nazi sympathiser also said remarkable things. Their compelling nature does not diminish his guilt. But his guilt is his and not something that should stand in our way of pursuing our truths.

Heidegger felt that our purpose in life was to think. I think I agree with him. philosophy = being.

Philosophy is about loving wisdom... Wisdom is larger and more generous than other forms of understanding, for it knows that it knows little and can accommodate our ignorance generously in the knowledge it has gathered and in the knowledge it knows is still to come. In wisdom we develop the most generous conception of humanity and are allowed, to align that conception to the fullest image of the universe, the one that allows its own transformation as we find out more. The object of philosophy is to develop a full understanding of man and his place. That relationship is explored in architecture on all levels. Buildings and the institutions and activities they house, the beliefs and values they cherish and clothe in mood are all expressions of that relationship.

The world is the condition of our existence. Without it we are lost.... Everything in the world is in some way related to us. So the particular “idea”, “form”, “paradigm”, “model” or “correspondence” we bring to bear on architecture is placed firmly within the exclusive focus of the fashion of the moment.

Fashion is really about what we focus on. It is a necessary and necessarily temporary focus on a particular theme, concern, or wish. Without fashions we would be aimless. Within the momentary focus that fashion imposes, the exploration of connections can exhaust themselves in teasing out their useful and poetic connection with humanity. In this way the new and the novel become part of that larger thing: experience or tradition. In this way we beget “styles” of

architecture, styles of doing things, styles of approaching problems. Their harmony and consistency derive from the collective concern with which we surround these styles, the way we constantly change them to suit our needs. Phenomenology and existentialism, to take just two, can be very useful if we take the time to investigate them sympathetically. To explain what philosophy is would require a book in its own right. What I will say is that it is itself also reliant on further disciplines. Disciplines, which themselves follow a similar division of interest as most others. These disciplines focus respectively on:

What have we got

What we want

What we should do with what we have got to get what we want

How we should communicate (or represent) this.

Philosophy is first and foremost a practical tool. It enriches our awareness of the relationships within the world, increases the resolution with which we see the world and makes us assess the usefulness of different relationships. To make this easier, philosophy has been divided into three departments:

Aesthetics: is the discipline which occupies itself with the definition of qualities; it defines what we have and what we want.

< P> Ethics: is the discipline which occupies itself with formulating strategies to achieve those qualities.

Metaphysics: occupies itself with making the above communicable, by establishing categories of things that belong together and developing a language which best describes things and their relation to other things. Metaphysics makes visible the landscape of qualities and the roads connecting them.

Phenomenology

Phenomena (things we can perceive through the senses) come alive in their description. The way we describe something establishes our particular relationship to it. (Try it... it works)
Description re-creates an object or quality with reference to our purpose and desire. By describing something in words, defining its qualities you offer points of contact for the mind. Experience needs to be described, from all points of view, above all from the perspective of the everyday.. The everyday is fundamental to existence. Experience needs to be described from all points of view, including the everyday..... The everyday is about time being the morning as well as its meticulous measurement in carefully standardised units. The everyday is about place and what happens there... and this, however trivial, having cosmic significance, even if only to you... it is also about how we wish to be in another place, always...

“Are prayer and measurement really very different activities?” Richard Meitner

Phenomenology assumes that judgement tells us more about the judge than the judged and seeks to describe the judgement to make us aware of its imperatives so that we might decide as to what we want.

A picture paints a thousand words.....The inverse is true as well: A word can conjure up a thousand pictures. It is through the description of things that we give our world a direction.

< P>An Economics of Architecture

Architects must consider not only the economics of the process of building, but also the economics of existence, of being in that building. Good architecture makes sound economic sense. Economies are created by people coming together. Good architecture can make them want to. The theatre of any activities relies on mood, the setting of appropriate relationships for it to take place well. At the same time the architect should allow for society to grow in its own image. Get the client to describe what they want, not in sketches, but in words, in qualities and allow those to find their connection with form in the mind of the architect.

Existentialism

Existentialism shows us that whatever the model of our universe we are condemned to be free in it. We are thrown into the world, among things and have to cope, to make our own decisions and take full responsibility for our existence. Even in situations where it is easy to blame others, there is still an opportunity to find your own role. To find your own responsibility and act accordingly is simply a good idea. We are condemned to be free. This freedom condemns us to make our own decisions and the taking of our own responsibility. We are thrown into the world, among things and have to cope.

To be thrown among things, things become part of our substance, not permanently perhaps, but no less intensely for that. Architecture is such a “thing” it envelops our daily life. Its lines of division mould our daily habits, guide our ways, set our relationship to others. We are condemned to be part of the world and condemned to act freely within that constraint. We cannot walk without the ground beneath our feet. In fact, our feet exist by virtue of the conditions that created the ground: matter and gravity.

Exploring the implications of this we could posit that theory is the direction we give to what we have. What we have is in itself inert, shapeless and essentially without direction, it is a protoplasmic theory, amorphous and pliant. It consists of the sedimentation of thought collected through the ages, layered in time and distributed in various densities according to the locality, but essentially no more than the dull matter of past thought accreting around old and moribund desires. When touched this mass is shaped by divisions and categories moulded into purpose and given direction by a process of systematic violation.

This chaos becomes theory when we recreate its clods of formless thought into magnificent dreams, disciplined to our image, our vision. Our various theories are as independent as our bodies are independent of the world: independent enough to move over and through them to

reconfigure the distribution of parts to a certain extent, but never independent enough to “live” without them.

The compelling nature of any one fashion in architecture is dependent upon the climate of meaning in which it forms, but the quality of the architecture begot within that climate is dependent on the relationship it proposes between the world and humanity.

Fashions disappoint. We practice our disappointment on them. We soon find them exhausted. Actually it is our mind that is exhausted our conception too narrow or incomplete to see only banal formalisms.

Stay Angry. A sublime and self-indulgent anger takes over when we see fashionable architecture blatantly disregard the transcendent conditions of good architecture: the four generators that relate everything back to humanity.

We don't like arbitrary choices and we also dislike the pretence that people make in protecting themselves against the arbitrary by positing all sort of magical correspondences, and then finding that the relationships they posit are as hot air passing through the scaffolding of their teeth. And yet we do not ridicule their desire for such correspondences. We simply want decisions to form to be compelling to guide us through the circuitry of choice.

In the light of our present passion: non-linearity, chaos, hyper-reality, the post-modern condition, which has made the lack of stability the firm foundation of our existence, we laugh at the men who came before, for their hermetic magic, their scientific or theological reasons, their divinities, and in the same short breath love what they did.

For all their curious hermetic magic, architects have seen some fabulous architecture in the reflection of their seemingly shallow thoughts.

Andrea Palladio, 1508-1580, loved harmonic proportions. Proportions derived from the correspondence between the length of a string.... and the sound it gives when plucked. Such a correspondence was thought to be divine. The Villa Rotonda IS THE RESULT OF HIS MAGIC. And it is divine. Louis Sullivan wanted form to follow function. So how does that work? And which functions are included in this formula? How is a function related to a form? $\text{Form} = f(\text{Function})$; $\text{Function} = \text{Act per-form}$. If, despite its dubious logic, this relationship is nevertheless taken seriously, does it not depend on the cunning insertion of a starting-point somewhere in the middle of the process of reasoning (the dialectic) establishing cause and effect? Isn't that what Louis Sullivan actually did? And does his success not depend on the most generous conception of both form and function to humanity? Le Corbusier believed in esoteric proportional systems: especially the golden section. He also loved modern life, travel, technology and industry and had a healthy obsession with health. Not to mention his marvellous faculty to describe and compose within the language of classicism which he violated so creatively and described with such creative violence. Mies van der Rohe believed in the simple harmony of the Platonic Solids. His architecture is so quiet...

All these architects, believed their magic was more than a quiet, individual wish. They believed that their magic was so good that it could take on the universal, I.e. that all everyone in the whole world could find themselves...here. What confidence! Seen as the individual creations of artist-thinkers, i.e. kept at the scale of their achievements as designers and removed from their ambition as pseudo messiah's turned world dictators, it remains beautiful and moving architecture. Louis Kahn thought a brick should be allowed to be what it wanted to be... What foolishness then that he thought a brick wanted to be a brick. Come on.... All bricks dream of growing into arches one day. Here is a depressive's definition of an arch: a row of bricks that stays up only because they all want to fall down at the same time. Heinrich von Kleist, the author of this definition committed suicide together with his lover, while they were making love... Jorn Utzon simply liked sailing boats. The positivists of the 60's were the worst of the bunch, they believed they could quantify man, translate him into numbers giving each little number its own numbered little box. They loved numbers. It didn't work like that.... And yet, many made beautiful architecture.

Magic is the art with which people change the behaviour of others. Magic posits possibilities. So what is wrong with a little magic, a little voodoo, if it works? There is nothing mysterious about magic, it is simply an agent which can affect behaviour and change a mood. Simply telling you that this watch is mine, will (hopefully) stop you stealing it. That is magic.... Magic pushes against the conceptual framework of the universe and regulates mood and behaviour. Magic is an integral part of architecture.

Great architects examined the world, even its trivia: belief in the music of the spheres, absurdities in the great scheme of their own naïve conceptions, but, apart from the fact that they were seriously held paradigms, these things ceased to be trivial the moment they managed to tease their poetic relation to humanity and celebrating that relationship, generously.

The conditions for success in architecture are both elusive and inexhaustible and yet firmly grounded in a number of well-defined practical concerns, loosely bundled in Hillier's four generators of architecture.

Trivial objects and personal memories are profound: tease their relation to humanity and celebrate that relationship, generously. It is our relation to the material realities of the everyday, which makes possible our spiritual life.

The everyday, the laughter in the city, provide the most enduring categories of the mind by which the reading of the world, our reading of the divine or numinous and the everyday can be sorted and combed and given its philosophical depth. And this is not strange as it is our relation to the material realities of the everyday, which makes possible our spiritual life. In the light of this we might look again at the project of post-modernism.

THE PROJECT OF POST MODERNISM IS: Not to make banal pastiche buildings but TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CHOICES. Aalto explored forms for their multivalence and with that process of exploration he conjured up a theatre of well placed functions. Daniel Liebeskind simply does not "like" curves This honest but arbitrary rule has allowed him to explore the crumpling of form with dramatic effect. Peter Eisenman explores oppositions to see

how dissolve into nothing or less. Coop Himmelb(l)au, “like” playing with chance, systematising the arbitrary fall of the pen, and exploring its structural possibility with real refinement.

They use that to create spaces designed specifically for the confident “Nietzschean Supermen” who use their spatial setting to unhinge the resolve of the meek and the uncertain. In fact much modern architecture was designed for the confident and the strident, for supermen. This is the primary cause of its failure as a universal style for a frightened world. Hadid *likes* a sensuous dynamism, she likes formalistic analogies with chaos and she enjoys being hard-edged. Frank Gehry started out just being contrary, a rebel exploding his comfortable suburban house into a designer shanty shack. He then began to “like” sculpture and the idea of denying architecture the right to be heavy, denying man the right to his fundamental relationship with the ground he walks upon: the right-angle. They are not giving into the arbitrary. They simply accept responsibility for what they do. Meaning is not stable but subject to the gravity of desire and preoccupation; it precipitates as rain from “the cloud of unknowing”. **THEY POSIT THEIR WORK, TAKE THEIR HANDS OFF, AND ALLOW IT TO TAKE SHAPE IN THE MIND OF THE ONLOOKER**

Their theory is protected from the arbitrary. Not by accepting as absolute, some permanent paradigm, but by pushing against accumulated experience collected around the gravity of desire and standing up, by aligning justifications to the current climate of meaning, by building into the unknown, expanding the area of what is known; expanding the border of the unknown; by positing a generous conception of the world and our place in it as participants in something larger. A decision contains an imperative, and a greed which reflects man’s newly found place in the world.

It is the architecture that bumbles along, thoughtlessly disconnecting itself from its purpose, oblivious to all it touches and destroys, refusing to struggle to maintain itself against the background of current thinking and the re-evaluation of the past, that makes our world so dire. Such architecture, such blind, stumbling architecture has put its trust in habit and so lost its connection with man, knows nothing of the life that he leads, of the essence of the quiet interval which gives him room for hope and expectation. That blindness of man for man, translates man into bare necessities and minimum standards, removed from his place in the world, set apart from his dignity, lonely in his carefully severed environment.

So how should theory and architecture integrate in the design studio?

There are two issues: education looks at the kind of person we want, the desirable knowledge, skills and values we would like an aspiring architect to acquire, and looks at ways to encourage the horse to drink architecture looks at the kind of environment we want to live in and the spirit in which it should be created.

Who has what responsibility? The design tutors set demands and create expectations and then negotiate the obstacles thrown up by the students’ inexperience in the discipline of design. They are the real theorists, who show how and speak of how: they mediate. The other subjects peripheral to the design studio, are there to back them up, to deepen out concepts, and to place

them within the historical and philosophical framework of the growing clod of accreted thought from which theory forges its purpose and direction.

It is therefore essential that the two talk theory together in order to teach architecture. Learning is a chaotic process. Education divides itself into demands and expectations these must be clearly and explicitly formulated. Tutors must constantly re-claim the authority for the moral high-ground they inhabit.

Students must see the work of their tutors: Education is about them doing what we do and how we do it and not just what we say and how we say it should be done.

Architectural experience is charged with your own preoccupations. That is good and if this is made clear and explicit to the student, it is both good and helpful to them.

As teachers and students, we have the duty to re-acquaint ourselves continuously with thinking: to form our attitude with regard to the latest thought, whatever that attitude might be. We have the duty to avoid jumping to conclusions within our own narrow perspective. We have the duty to place the universal themes of thought consciously within the contingencies of our own locality, our own cultural luggage, our own desires by judging that thought according to its potential and as much as is possible on its own terms.

Within such a framework issues of personal taste, preference and judgement are paramount and essential to discourse...when settled on personal authority...which means leaving enough room for people to use your thought creatively

We need students who are robust enough to accept criticism for what it is and use it constructively All forms of criticism are constructive. The students, however, need to be armed with confidence to combat the destructive effects of despair. Then criticism becomes useful to them. Confident people are people who can listen carefully and argue well.

All four generators find their justification in humanity, therefore design should not lose sight of that humanity even by being once removed. All forms of separation and segregation, at all scales are to be considered an evil and entered on with eyes open for the consequences.

Technology is not an end in itself. Technology is the synthesis between the possibilities revealed by science and the artistic interpretation of our desires. It is in the service of that when technology may be invoked. All these new means serve the same old ends: humanity. In aligning these means without corruption to the ends they should serve, the possibility of a good architecture emerges.

All technological aspects of the building are in the service of that vision of humanity....even when technology itself is the object of celebration.