

FIRST SEMESTER DESIGN, PROJECT 1: A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE  
(Weeks 1 & 2)

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Each of you has an extensive familiarity with the built environment; you've lived in it all your life. A major part of design education is the training of your vision so that you become conscious of what before was seen but went unnoticed. You will learn to read what before was either undecipherable or invisible.

As your vision is educated, you will see and understand more of the world. Sharpening one's vision is a powerful exercise. The world around you will never look the same. The world around you will therefore never be the same.

To appreciate the extent of your environmental awareness, each of you is to choose an experience that is memorable, a place or event that has personal significance. This experience should involve the built environment rather than the natural. Think of a building or room that affected you. It might be a place you've lived in all your life or visited only briefly. It might be a memory that is sharp and vivid or one that is vague though haunting.

Now try and understand specifically why that place and that experience are so powerful. What about the place made it special--its location, scale, proportion, materials, the quality of light. Think also of those personal conditions that made the place special--your need for security, for retreat or participation; your sense of play and adventure; your need for mystery.

ASSIGNMENT

Build a model that communicates both the place and, more importantly, your experience of it. The model should be no larger than 1'x1'x1' and can use any media. It should be well crafted and sturdy enough to be turned upside down and shaken lightly. It must have a hollow mat board base 2" thick with a top, bottom and interior stiffeners. Treat the base as part of the overall model.

Rather than a literal representation of the place or experience, convey instead its abstract qualities; i.e. the fundamental nature of the experience that transcends the literal concrete situation.

TERMS: Literal, abstract.

SECOND SEMESTER DESIGN  
PROJECT 3: A WINDOW IS A WALL WHICH ISN'T (Weeks 5, 6 & 7)

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The use of natural light is one of the most critical concerns in environmental design. Light sets the mood of a place, affects our perception and--to an extent--determines human emotion. There is only one source for natural light--the sun, which is the source of life on Earth. A great building is often profound because of the way it modulates this essential element.

Light can be handled in two ways: directly, in which both the light source and its primary reflection are apparent; and indirectly, in which the light source is hidden, with only secondary reflections visible, though the primary reflection also sometimes shows (see illustrations on next page).

ASSIGNMENT

Each person is to produce two light boxes made of white opaque board, 9"x9"x12", as shown on the next page. One model will present an example of indirect light, the other an example of direct light. Begin by building a study model of each at full or half scale, again of white board.

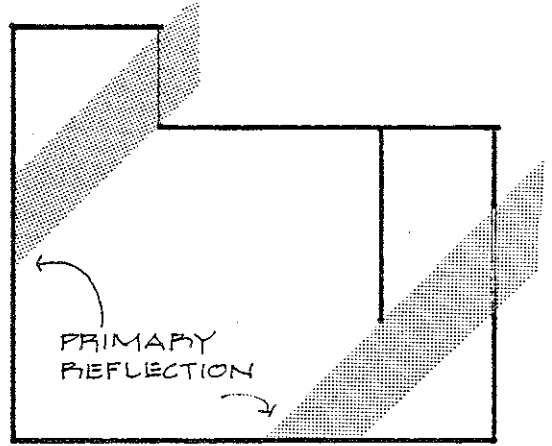
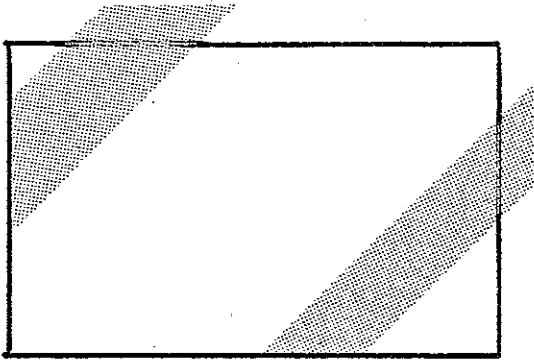
Each model--or room--shall support a specific activity, the light being appropriate for that activity, with simple props included to suggest the room's use. Think also of what might lie beyond the box, of its setting. All material shall be white. Textures may be used sparingly if they bear directly on the light quality.

In the direct light study, experiment with the ways a window can affect the apparent size, shape and proportion of the room. Use a scale figure 4 1/2" tall to test the scale. In the indirect study, cut and patch to find how indirect light can give emphasis, create mood and control overall light distribution.

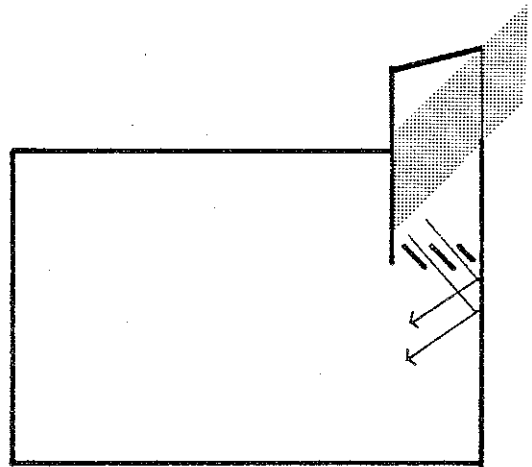
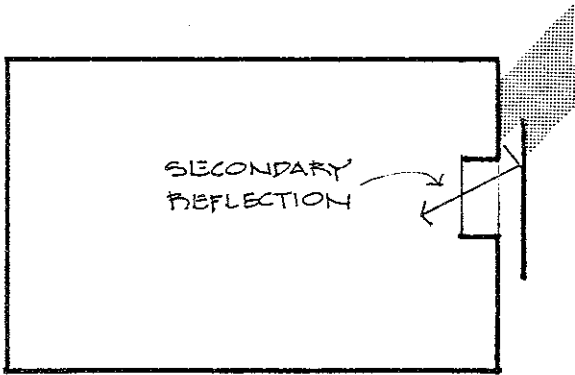
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Thirty spokes connect to the wheel's hub;  
yet it is the center hole that  
makes it useful.  
Clay is shaped into a vessel;  
yet it is the emptiness within  
that makes it useful.  
Doors and windows are cut for a room;  
yet it is the space where there is  
nothing that makes it useful.  
Therefore, though advantage comes from what is;  
usefulness comes from what is not.  
--The Tao Te Ching

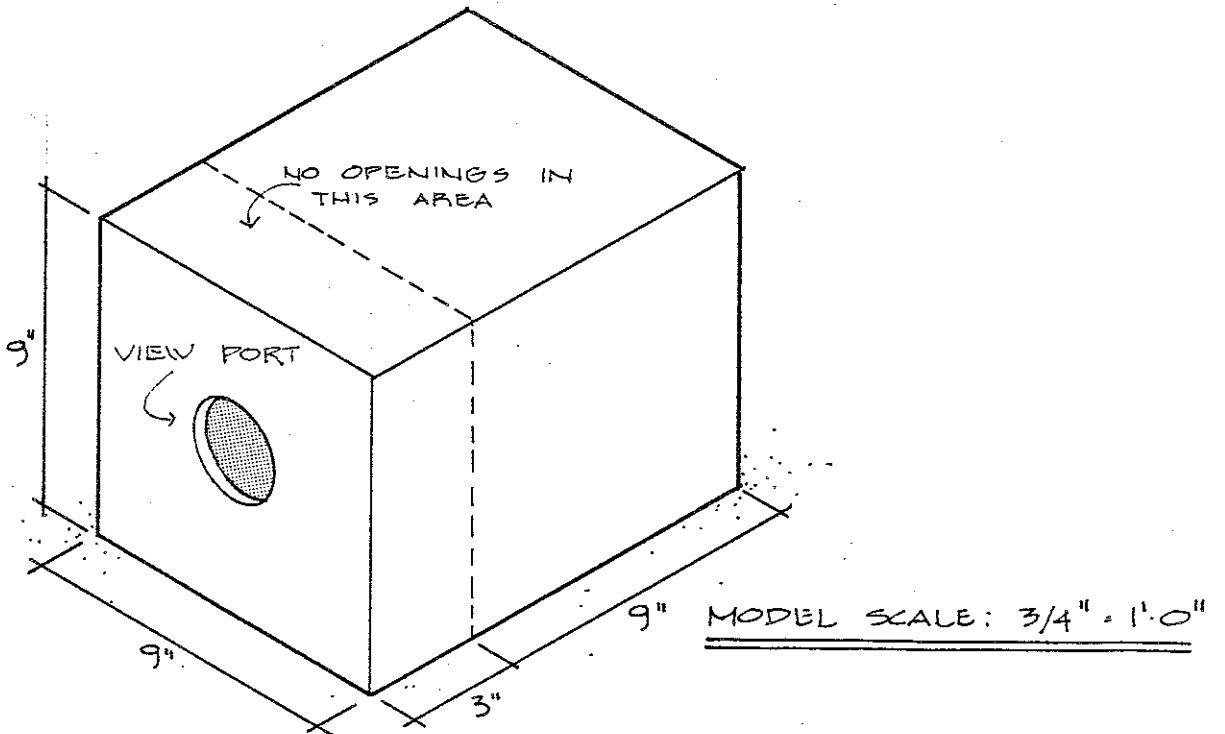
DIRECT LIGHT



INDIRECT LIGHT



LIGHT BOX MODEL



SECOND SEMESTER DESIGN

PROJECT 5: MONUMENT TO A PERSON, EVENT OR CONCEPT  
(Weeks 9, 10, & 11)

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Buildings have meaning just as do poems, operas and paintings. The users of our designs will be affected. The greater the design, the deeper the effect. This effect--and the value placed on it by the user--is the design's meaning.

Our experience of the built environment is emotional as well as physical. What goes on inside our heads and hearts colors the view coming in through the eyes. Our reaction to the outer world is the meaning it has for us.

Sometimes that meaning is extrinsic--the associations we have learned, such as the interpretation given a building when a cross is set atop the roof. Sometimes the meaning is intrinsic--a primary experience we get directly from the scale, light quality, size, etc., of the space independent of anything we may or may not have known beforehand. In a strong design the intrinsic meaning becomes the foundation supporting the extrinsic interpretation.

ASSIGNMENT

Each person is to design a spatial monument (rather than a monument which is a sculptural object) that conveys meaning relative to a person, event, or concept of personal significance. A design is usually most profound when something of the designer is invested in it.

As a spatial experience, the design must make meaningful use of the schematic elements place/path/realm. The meaning these elements have shall be conveyed in the actual experience of them--their intrinsic meaning--rather than in their symbolic value.

The site of this proposed spatial monument is a local park, a site plan of which will be provided in class.

PRESENTATION

Final presentation will be a model built of mat board at a scale of 1/4" = 1', with judicious use of color (acrylic paint). It shall include scale figures and plantings (trees and shrubs) of some durable material (no moss, lichen, or green sawdust).

TERMS: Intrinsic, extrinsic, meaning.

SECOND SEMESTER DESIGN  
PROJECT 6: A PAVILION OF LIGHT AND SPACE  
(Weeks 12, 13, 14 & 15)

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The City Parks and Recreation Department, to make more efficient use of Brackenridge Park without harming its existing charm, has decided to construct a multi-use pavilion on the southern parcel of park land, known as Allison Park. This piece of land, bounded on the north by Mulberry, on the east by River Road, and on the south and west by Allison Drive, was donated to the City in 1917 and was formerly the Charro Arena.

The proposed pavilion, to be known as Allison Pavilion, is intended to reflect the existing character of the Joske Pavilion and the Koehler Pavilion without mimicking them. On the contrary, the City wants a contemporary design, but one that is timeless in nature.

The new pavilion is intended to be low key in impact so as to minimize its intrusion into the nearby neighborhood. The City thinks this can be accomplished by simplicity in design and siting, and careful landscaping. Parking should be provided for only ten cars. Other parking will make use of existing lots to the north of Mulberry.

To control vandalism, the project is to use no glass or plastic windows or skylites, and is to be made primarily of masonry walls with metal or tile roofs.

SPACE NEEDS PROGRAM

1. An outdoor meditation area of approximately 6000 sq. ft.; may be walled or open and of any configuration. This area should include:
  - a. A decorative fountain
  - b. Eight to ten palm trees
2. A covered congregation area of approx. 6000 sq. ft., including:
  - a. Informal raised stage of approx. 200 sq. ft.
  - b. Lockable storage for folding chairs, of 200 sq. ft.
  - c. Men's and women's restrooms of 200 sq. ft. each
  - d. Informal food service area of 100 sq. ft., with counter and sink.

3. Two smaller covered areas for general use, approx. 600 sq.ft. each.
4. In addition, distributed throughout the design shall be six places designed for meetings of from two to six persons. These spaces may be open or covered. Their area may be considered part of the larger areas. They should be handled as more than just a few picnic tables scattered around the site.

#### EMPHASIS

The design should be thought of as a compound, i.e. a system of paths and places connected and unified by gates, locks, nodes and transitions. A proportioning system should unify the parts into a whole. Emphasis is on the clarity and intersection of the individual spaces and masses, the manner of their connection or union, and the places between.

In addition, the design must make dramatic and effective use of natural light. It must demonstrate at least one instance each of direct and indirect light. It must allow for comfortable spaces for both winter and summer use.

#### PRESENTATION

One mat board model painted white, at 1" = 10', showing the project and immediate site. Abstract trees, shrubs, scale figures, and cars shall be included. Roofs of covered spaces should lift off. The model shall be constructed on a hollow reinforced mat board base 2" thick.

#### KEY CONCEPTS:

The space between.

Walls are always in the middle.

A window is a wall which isn't.