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HERNAN DIAZ ALONSO

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The photograph captures a dramatic art installation in a dark space. Several tall, thin, metallic poles rise from the floor, each topped with a complex, glowing structure. These structures resemble stylized, illuminated insects or abstract organisms, with multiple small light sources creating a starburst effect. The floor is dark and reflective, mirroring the light from the installations. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and futuristic.

PITCH BLACK INSTALLATION, MAK CENTER, VIENNA, 2007





HERNAN DIAZ ALONSO



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DON'T LOOK TOO HARD, I'M ALL SURFACE

ANDY WARHOL

IN THE END, EVERYTHING RETURNS TO THE SURFACE

GILLES DELEUZE & FELIX GUATTARI


61 SENTENCES IN THE FORM OF 1 LONG PARAGRAPH:

THE DARK SURFACES OF HERNAN DIAZ ALONSO

HERE'S 2,653 WORDS INTRODUCING A YOUNG ARGENTINIAN ARCHITECT LIVING IN LOS ANGELES AND TEACHING IN LOS ANGELES AND NEW YORK, WRITTEN ON BA 026 THIS EVENING BETWEEN SEOUL AND HONG KONG BY AN AMERICAN ARCHITECT ON HIS WAY BACK TO A SCHOOL HE DIRECTS IN LONDON, FOR A MONOGRAPH THAT I'M TOLD WILL BE PUBLISHED IN CHINA AND SOLD IN PLENTY OF OTHER PLACES. THE PUBLISHER TELLS ME THAT YOU WILL BE READING THESE WORDS IN CHINESE, WHICH OF COURSE MAKES THIS ALL THE MORE FUN FOR ADDING TO THE WEIRD NETWORKS, LANGUAGES AND INTERFACES THROUGH WHICH ALL ARCHITECTURAL KNOWLEDGE, IMAGERY AND INFORMATION NOW ROUTINELY CIRCULATES AS EXTENSIONS OF 'THE WORK' OF AN ARCHITECT. BUT ANYWAY, HERE GOES MY SMALL CONTRIBUTION TO THE PECULIARITIES OF TODAY'S ARCHITECTURAL GEOGRAPHIES AND [THEIR, OUR] IMAGINATION. AS EVEN YOUNG-PUNKS-WITH-LOTS-OF-RAM - WITH-TOO-MUCH-TIME-AND-TONS-OF-TALENT TYPE OF STUFF GOES, THE WORK OF HERNAN DIAZ ALONSO (HEREAFTER, HDA) IS REALLY FRINGE-WORTHY, AND CLEARLY WANTS IT THAT WAY. AS HIPSTERS BACK IN THE DAY USED TO SAY WHEN THEY CAME ACROSS TERRY RILEY'S IN C, OR MORE RECENTLY WHEN YOUNG STARBUCKS LATTE-SIPPING LIT CRIT MAJORS BREATHLESSLY PROCLAIMED AFTER FIRST CRACKING OPEN DAVID FOSTER WALLACE'S MEGALOMANIACAL 90S TOTALLY-

DECADE-DEFINING INFINITE JEST, HDA'S WORK IS SIMPLY THIS: ITS OUT THERE. THIS IS ARCHITECTURAL IMAGERY THAT DOESN'T NEED CAPTIONS IN ORDER FOR YOU TO EITHER GET IT OR NOT (ONE CONSEQUENCE OF WHICH IS CLEARLY THAT THIS TEXT IS PRETTY REDUNDANT FOR RENDERING ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE LOOK OF A CERTAIN KIND OF ARCHITECTURAL BOOK). HDA'S PROJECTS ARE, ABOVE ALL, KNOWING. THEY'RE CLEVER, BAD-BOY, SELF-CONSCIOUS, AND LOADS OF FUN. THEY ARE GROTESQUE BUT NOT UGLY, MANNERED IF NOT BAROQUE, DRAWN NO LESS THAN PROGRAMMED, MACHINED BUT ALSO THE PRODUCT OF A VERY GOOD EYE. MOSTLY, THESE ARE PROJECTS THAT LOOK A WHOLE LOT LESS LIKE CONVENTIONAL ARCHITECTURE THAN THEY DO STRANGE MUTANT BOTANICAL SPECIES GONE PORNOGRAPHICALLY BIG, HARD, AND BAD ASS. THAT THE FIRST SEVERAL YEARS OF PROJECTS BY THE STILL YOUTHFUL HDA ARE EVEN NOW IN THE SPRING OF 2007 BEING STUDIED BY HIS (EVEN MORE PRECOCIOUS) ARCHITECTURAL STUDENTS AND SMARTER JUNIOR PEERS (AND NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, BY PORNOGRAPHERS OR LATE-NIGHT CURATORS AT NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUMS) SAYS A WHOLE LOT MORE ABOUT ARCHITECTURE AND ITS VIEWING HABITS THESE DAYS THAN ANY ONE OF HDA'S SPECTACULARLY HIGH-RESOLUTION, LENS-FLARED, 3D-PRINTED, RENDERINGS COULD EVER DREAM OF DOING. THIS MANDARIN 'EARLY PERIOD' DEMI-MONOGRAPH FOR WHICH I'M QWERTY-DICTATING THESE WORDS AT 32,000 FEET THIS EVENING WILL, I'M TOLD, BE MACHINE-PRINTED, GLUED AND HARD-BOUND INTO AN ELEGANT, SLIM VOLUME AS A 'COMPLETE WORKS' OF HDA'S STILL PROTO-CAREER. ONE THING TO NOTE AT THE OUTSET: THESE ARE PICTURES MUCH MORE THAN BUILT WORKS, AND ONES THAT MOST OF THE TIME (TO MOST OF THE PEOPLE) LOOK ABOUT AS ARCHITECTURAL AS DO OUT-TAKES FROM THE DAY OF THE TRIFFOODS. AS HDA HIMSELF HAS FREQUENTLY SAID AT SOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND DEBATES HE AND I HAVE HELD FOR AUDIENCES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC, MOST DAYS HE WAKES UP 'FEELING LIKE A FILM DIRECTOR STUCK IN AN ARCHITECT'S BODY' (WHEREUPON I'VE ASKED CAMERON, KUBRIK, OR ALMODAVAR?-SHAPE STILL MATTERS). HIS IS A CONFESSION THAT COMING FROM MOST PEOPLE WOULD SOUND

LIKE INSECURITY; A FEAR OF POVERTY, OR LACK OF FAME (BOTH, WELL-KNOWN ARCHITECTURAL ANXIETIES). BUT LOOKING AT HDA'S SPECTACULAR LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY, I'D SUGGEST SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY: THE STATEMENT IS SIMPLY A VERBAL EXPRESSION GIVEN TO A SENSATION HE'S FOUND A WAY TO MAKE INSTRUMENTAL: THAT OF WANTING TO CRAWL OUT OF ONE'S OWN SKIN. IT'S A FEELING BY THE WAY NOT ENTIRELY UNLIKE THE ONE YOU GET LOOKING AT SOME OF HIS BUILDINGS. LET'S SITUATE THE WORK GENERATIONALLY: IF GREG'S FORWARD EDGE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL ENVELOPE A DECADE AGO GOT CARTOON-CHARACTERISED WAY TOO QUICKLY BY POPULIST ARCHITECTURAL JOURNALISM AS 'THE BLOB' IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 1950S SCI-FI CLASSIC OF THE SAME NAME (A VIEW OF COURSE GREG HAD MORE THAN A HAND IN CULTIVATING), HDA'S SELF-CONSCIOUS ATTEMPT AT ONE-UPMANSHIP (ISN'T THAT ALWAYS WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE NEXT GENERATION?) RECURSIVELY BURSTS OUT OF THE BODY OF SCI-FI IMAGERY OF A MUCH MORE RECENT SPECIAL F/X VINTAGE; RIDLEY SCOTT'S 1979 MASTERPIECE, ALIEN. HR GIGER'S SLIMY, SCALY, AND ALTOGETHER MENACING CURVILINEAR SURFACES DESIGNED BY THE SWISS IMAGINEER ARE THE FILM'S SPECTACULARLY EROTICISED (AND LARGELY HIDDEN) MONSTER. WHICH IS FILMED BY SCOTT AGAINST DELIBERATELY MUNDANE SETS WITH LOW LIGHT LEVELS IN SCARILY EMPTY, DARKENED, INTERIORS. IT'S A HORROR-PICTURE CONVENTION, THE USE OF FLAT DULL BACKGROUNDS TO HEIGHTEN A VIEWER'S ATTENTION ON THE WRITHING, TWISTING, AND TEARING SURFACES OF A MONSTER BROUGHT TO LIFE FROM THE ORDINARY WORLD AROUND IT, A VISUAL TRICK THAT HEIGHTENS A VIEWER'S PERCEPTION AS WELL AS ANXIETY, REGARDING THE RELIABILITY OF HIS OR HER OWN SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE. THIS BINARY (ON/OFF) REGIME OF BRIGHTENED FOREGROUND/DARKENED BACKGROUND (FIRST MINTED BY THE OLD MASTERS; REMEMBER THE DOMESTIC PORTRAITS OF GOYA, VERMEER, ET AL) RECALLS AS WELL THE CODES AND CONVENTIONS OF MODERN ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING. IN THEIR MODERN INCARNATION THESE GO WAY BACK AND CAN BE WITNESSED IN MIES' PRE-PHOTOSHOP CHARCOAL DRAWINGS, WHICH BY HIS OWN ADMISSION HE USES



TO TRY AND CONVEY THE REFLECTIVE QUALITIES OF HIS ALL-GLASS FRIEDRICH-STRASSE TOWER. BUT WHAT MIES' EFFORT COMMUNICATES MOSTLY IS JUST THE SENSE OF UNEASE FELT BY THE VIEWER UPON SEEING HIS NEWLY MODERN ARCHITECTURE HIGHLIGHTED, DELINEATED AND THEN DEAD-DROPPED ATOP AN OTHERWISE DIM, DARKENED PRE-MODERN 19TH CENTURY BERLIN (A REALITY ON LATER ACHIEVED IN FILMS LIKE INDEPENDENCE DAY, WAR OF THE WORLDS, ETC.). FOR A MUCH MORE COMPUTATIONAL (AND NO LESS CALCULATED) VIEW OF THE ANIMATE POTENTIAL OF ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING'S POTENTIAL, NOW FLIP AHEAD IN THIS BOOK A FEW PAGES TO SEE IT IN OPERATION AGAIN, BUT THIS TIME LITERALLY PUT TO WORK AS A WAY OF CONCEIVING AND THINKING ARCHITECTURAL FORM ITSELF. IN HDA'S HANDS (AND/OR HIS ASSISTANTS' MICE AND KEYBOARDS) A COMPLETE RELIANCE ON A FILMIC OR PAINTERLY FOREGROUND/BACKGROUND SCHEMA BECOMES, IN EFFECT, AN ENTIRELY NEW KIND OF MATERIAL WORLD (IRONICALLY, WITHIN THE VACUUM OF A DIGITAL MODELLING SPACE) THROUGH WHICH ALL THE QUALITIES ASSOCIATED WITH MORE IMMEDIATE ARCHITECTURAL WORLDS CAN BE CONTROLLED: GRAVITY, MASS, WEIGHT, FORCE, MOTION. THESE ARE THE MATERIAL PROPERTIES BEING SHAPED BY HDA'S RENDERING OPERATIONS, WHICH UTTERLY SURPASS THE NORMATIVE TWO-DIMENSIONAL DESCRIPTIONS OF HOW THESE AND OTHER MATERIAL FORCES INVISIBLY INTERACT IN CONVENTIONAL PLANS AND SECTIONS. IN THE SWOLLEN SHAPES FOUND WITHIN HDA'S WORK WE FIND OURSELVES TRAPPED WITHIN A MALLEABLE ARCHITECTURAL UNIVERSE OF PURE SIMULATION - AND ALMOST NO REPRESENTATION (WHICH I ADMIT SOUNDS WAY TOO BAUDRILLARD-Y FOR AN ERA OF LINUX OR OSX; SORRY ABOUT THAT). WHATEVER ELSE IT IS, THIS IS AN ARCHITECTURE NOT OF, SO MUCH AS SPECIAL EFFECT. HDA'S HIGH-RESOLUTION CLOSE-UP/BIT-MAPPED/MENTAL-RAYED PIXEL-BY-PIXEL RENDERINGS POSSESS MOLECULAR-LEVEL FORMS OF DETAIL, WHICH OF COURSE THEY AS BUILDINGS WILL LITERALLY CONTAIN AS SOON AS THE ARCHITECT FINDS A 3D PRINTER BIG ENOUGH TO GET 1:1 PRINTS OF FILES RIGHT NOW MOSTLY RENDERED AS PICTURES (ALREADY, HDA HAS EXPERIMENTED WITH

ROOM-SIZED STL OUTPUT; BUILDING-SIZED 3D PRINTING IS LOOMING ON THE HORIZON). HDA'S DEPICTION OF TWISTED, SWIRLING MULTI-COLOURED BODIES ON BLACK, FLAT BACKGROUNDS CAN BEST BE GRASPED IF WE TRY AND CONTINUE TO SITUATE THEM OUTSIDE OF ARCHITECTURE. WEIRD FIGURES ON DARKENED BACKDROPS WERE FAMOUSLY MINED TO GREAT SUCCESS NOT LONG BEFORE RIDLEY SCOTT'S ALIEN EFFORTS BY ANOTHER TORTURED BODY PAINTER, THE ENGLISH PAINTER FRANCIS BACON. INTERESTINGLY, IT IS BACON'S SCARY PORTRAITS (WHICH TYPICALLY ARE OF FACES SO DISTORTED OR DEFORMED THAT THEY LOOK LESS LIKE HUMANS THAN THEY DO PIECES OF MEAT) THAT HAVE BEEN CITED COUNTLESS TIMES BY THE INDUSTRIALISED MACHINERY OF TODAY'S PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS AND THEORISTS AS INSPIRATION FOR THE 'DIAGRAMMATIC' SENSIBILITIES OF THE 90S PAPERBACK-PHILOSOPHER GILLES DELEUZE, WHICH HE HIMSELF GAVE A NOD TO IN A BOOK ON BACON (RIGHT BEFORE GD LEAPT TO HIS DEATH FROM HIS PARIS APARTMENT WINDOW...AS ONE UNKIND FRENCH COMMENTATOR CALLED IT, DEATH BY DE-FENESTRATION). (HERE WE CAN DO A BIT OF FOOTNOTE-LIKE DISCURSING OF ARCHITECTURE'S OWN KINDS OF DISCOURSE: DOES THE ACCELERATED RISE AND FALL OF 'THE DIAGRAM' AS A TOPIC MAKE IT THE DOT-COM SECTOR OF 90S ARCHITECTURAL CONVERSATION?). WE FIND BACON'S/SCOTT'S TWISTED-BODY/FLAT-BACKDROP SET-UP EVERYWHERE IN HDA'S METHOD, WHERE ITS BEEN DOWNLOADED, RIPPED AND SAMPLED (TARRANTINO-LIKE) IN SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS AND SO MANY ITERATIONS THAT IT'S BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO ITS OWN KIND OF PROPRIETARY (THAT IS, CLOSED-SOURCE) DESIGN ENGINE. WE SEE REFLECTED IN THE SURFACES OF THE ARCHITECT'S WELL-POLISHED PROJECTS A FASCINATING AND ENTIRELY NEW KIND OF ARCHITECTURAL DIAGRAM (CALL IT DIAGRAM 2.0?) RELATIVELY UNTOUCHED BY A FIRST GENERATION OF DIGITAL ARCHITECTS: THAT OF HIGH-RESOLUTION RENDERING ITSELF AS A LIVE MEDIUM FOR THE DIGITAL/BIOLOGICAL ORIGINATION, EVOLUTION AND (EVENTUALLY) VISUALISATION OF 21ST CENTURY ARCHITECTURAL FORM. THIS IS A KIND OF INTENSELY VISUAL ARCHITECTURAL IMAGINATION

[HADID AND EL LISSITZKY LINGER WITHIN THE GENEALOGY] WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR ANYTHING BUT ITS OWN [SOMETIMES SCIENCE-FICTIONAL] DISCIPLINARY HISTORY. HERE WE CAN SEE RENDERING HAVING BECOME OPERATIONAL, ORGANISATIONAL, AND STRUCTURAL: THIS IS RENDERING WITH PREJUDICE. [FOOTNOTE: THE ONLY CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLE OF THIS SORT OF SYSTEMATIC INTERROGATION OF THE 'CRITICAL' POTENTIAL OF PICTORIAL REALISM THAT I CAN THINK OF WOULD BE THE POST-CONCEPTUAL INSTINCT OF 1970S PHOTOREALISM, AS FOUND IN THE WORK OF RICHARD ESTES, CHUCK CLOSE AND THAT GENERATION, PART OF A NY SCENE THAT TRIED TO GENUINELY TURN ON ITS HEAD THAT ERA'S CONCEPTUAL INTELLIGENCE, EMBEDDED IN THE WRITINGS OF LEWITT, EISENMAN, KRAUSS AND OTHERS). NOT TO PUT TO FINE A POINT ON IT, BUT THE RESULTS OF HDA'S INTENSELY REALISTIC RENDERINGS OF UNFAMILIAR OBJECTS OR BODIES REALLY ROCK PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THEIR DEVOTION TO A MICROSCOPIC, ALMOST SURGICAL AND HYPER-PRECISE ANATOMICAL DEPICTION OF BODIES A VIEWER NONETHELESS STILL CAN'T QUITE RECOGNISE (THIS IS WHERE THE WORK LEARNS FROM THE MONA LISA OF PO-MO CINEMATIC SCI-FI, ALIEN MEETS PREDATOR). I COULD GO ON AND ON TALKING ABOUT HDA'S STUFF THIS WAY, LIKE SOME KIND OF GLAZED FILM FAN RATHER THAN THE SORT OF SERIOUS ARCHITECTURAL ANALYST THIS ESSAY'S SUPPOSED TO IMPLY (SORRY TO HAVE LET YOU DOWN SO FAR). I COULD MAKE UP EVEN MORE OBSCURE COMPARISONS, DREAM UP YET OTHER FICTIONAL PRECEDENTS, SCRATCH OUT FUNNIER OR WITTIER TEXTUAL INNUENDO; THE TECHNIQUES ARCHITECTS TOO OFTEN STILL WANT TO ALIGN WITH AN ECONOMY OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES. INSTEAD, LET ME JUST WALLPAPER THE REST OF MY LIMITED PAGE-SPACE IN A MORE SUPERFICIAL WAY, I.E. BY STICKING TO THE SURFACE. CLEARLY, THAT'S WHERE HDA'S OWN INTEREST AND NOT JUST THAT OF HIS PROJECTS RESIDES. LIKE BACON'S PAINTINGS, IT IS IN THE DISTORTED AGONY OF A SURFACE WHERE WE MOST CONSISTENTLY FIND IN HDA'S ARCHITECTURE THE KIND OF DEPTH THAT TOO MANY ARCHITECTS STILL ASSIGN TO OLD-SCHOOL ARCHITECTURAL PROPERTIES LIKE MASS, VOLUME, STRUCTURE,

OR SPACE. THESE AND MANY OTHER ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPTS ARE AT WORK IN THESE PROJECTS, BUT HAVE BEEN CONVERTED INTO LITTLE MORE THAN FORCE FIELDS USED TO FORM (AND CONTINUOUSLY DE-FORM) SUPPLE SURFACES OF ALL KINDS. IN HDA'S WORLD, SURFACE TRUMPS SPACE, AND PRETTY MUCH EVERY OTHER KIND OF ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT. IN THESE PROJECTS, SPACE HAS BEEN MADE MUTE, AT LEAST AS AN ORGANISATIONAL FORCE IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL MATTER. IT'S A REFRESHING, AND I SUSPECT GENERATIONAL, CHANGE. RIDLEY SCOTT USED AS THE TAG LINE FOR THE TRAILERS ADVERTISING HIS ALIEN IN ITS PRE-LAUNCH PUBLICITY A QUARTER-CENTURY AGO THIS GREAT LINE: 'IN SPACE, NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM'. LIKEWISE, HDA CHALLENGES OUR EVERYDAY ARCHITECTURAL EXPECTATIONS THAT SPACE MATTERS ABOVE ALL ELSE BY SHIFTING OUR ATTENTION SIDEWAYS, TOWARDS THAT OF THE SURFACE. IN HDA'S WORK THE LONG-HELD MODERN ARCHITECTURAL CONVICTION THAT THE SHAPING AND ORGANISING OF BUILT SPACE LIES AT THE DISCURSIVE CENTRE OF THE DISCIPLINE HAS BEEN ERODED, IF NOT OUTRIGHT DISSOLVED. THERE IS OF COURSE PLENTY OF CONTEXT FOR THIS CHANGE IN WORLD-VIEW: DURING A FEW SHORT YEARS AN EVOLUTIONARY LEAP IN SURFACE SENSIBILITIES AMONGST DESIGNERS HAS BEEN MADE INEVITABLE BY THE RAPID IMPROVEMENT AND INCREASED COMPUTATIONAL AND PROGRAMMING CAPACITY OF DIGITAL DESIGN AND ANIMATION SOFTWARE THAT NOW ALREADY DOMINATES ARCHITECTURAL AND OTHER DESIGN PRACTISES, ALL OF WHICH ARE BUILT AROUND CONTINUOUS SURFACE MODELLING OPERATIONS (WHICH IN TURN ARE NOW BEING EXPORTED TO ALL KINDS OF MANUFACTURING AND HARDWARE DOMAINS). WHICH IN TURN HAS RE-CONFIGURED NOT ONLY WHAT BUILDINGS, PRODUCTS AND STRUCTURES WILL BE LOOKING LIKE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, BUT AS WELL, HOW THEIR DESIGNERS AND PRODUCERS WILL BE WORKING ON - THAT IS, THINKING ABOUT - THEIR WORK. THESE NEW DESIGN SYSTEMS PROVIDE NOVEL CONCEPTUAL AND AESTHETIC FRAMEWORKS THROUGH WHICH A NEW GENERATION IS NOW APPROACHING ARCHITECTURAL PROBLEMS, INCLUDING A WHOLE HOST OF DISCIPLINARY-

DEFINING DESIGN OPERATIONS; THINGS LIKE THE RELATIONSHIP OF SOLID TO VOID, OF WALLS TO THEIR OPENINGS, THE DISPERSION OF FIXED ACTIVITY VS. CIRCULATION SPACES; ETC. HDA DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF GENERATIONALLY BY HIS DISLIKE OF ANY KIND OF TECHNICAL, JARGON-LADEN DESCRIPTION OF HOW HE ADDRESSES THESE PROBLEMS, WHICH, DESPITE CONSIDERABLE TECHNICAL COMPLEXITY (THE USE OF SCRIPTED, ITERATIVE OPERATIONS, ETC.) HE CERTAINLY NEVER MAKES A TOPIC OF ANY PROJECT PRESENTATION. AT A MORE TECHNICAL LEVEL, PLENTY OF HDA'S VISUAL INSPIRATION CAN BE NAILED DOWN BY REFERENCE TO SPECIFIC FILM INDUSTRY PERSONALITIES. AN OBVIOUS FIGURE WOULD BE SOMEONE LIKE SYD MEAD, THE GREAT AND LITTLE-KNOWN LA FILM VISUALIST, WHO LENT HIS FELT MARKER IMAGINATION A COUPLE DECADES AGO TO THE CREATION OF ICONIC DYSTOPIAN FUTURES IN THE SET, VEHICLE AND PRODUCT DESIGN OF CLASSICS LIKE TRON, BLADERUNNER, AND 2010. HERE'S SYD ON DESIGN, BUT DESCRIBING SOMETHING SOUNDING A WHOLE LOT MORE LIKE HDA'S BUSINESS PLAN: '... DESIGNERS IN ALL DISCIPLINES HAVE THE ENVIABLE TASK OF CREATING POSSIBILITIES BEYOND THE LIMITS OF THE MUNDANE AND THE PREDICTABLE, TO INVENT NOT JUST THE IDEA BUT THE RATIONALE FOR FUTURES NOT YET WITHIN THE GRASP OF AVAILABLE TECHNIQUE'. THERE'S PLENTY OF RESONANCE BETWEEN HDA AND OTHER FILM-INDUSTRY/ FUTURISTS, TOO MANY TO COUNT HERE. ONE TO MENTION HOWEVER IS THE GREAT ANIMATOR RICHARD (DOC) BAILY, WHOSE CREDITS INCLUDE THE CELL, SOLARIS, FIGHT CLUB AND WHOSE INCREDIBLE SELF-TAUGHT PROGRAMMING SKILLS, HOME-MADE SOFTWARE AND HAND-BUILT RENDERING FARM IN THE DARKENED BASEMENT OF HIS HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOME WAS A RESOURCE FOR SOME OF THE IMAGERY INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK (HDA TOOK ME TO SEE THE MASTER DURING THE TIME OF ONE OF THEIR COLLABORATIONS, NOT LONG BEFORE BAILY'S UNTIMELY PASSING). LET'S JUMP-CUT: WE'VE NOW REACHED THE POINT IN AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY LIKE THIS ONE WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO TAKE YOU ON A HAND-HELD TOUR OF A FEW OF THE PROJECTS IN MORE DETAIL, TO BOTH DEMONSTRATE MY FLUENCY, AND AS A WAY TO KEEP THOSE READERS READY TO RUN FOR THE DOOR HERE IN THE BOOK JUST A LITTLE BIT

LONGER. MY MICROSOFT WORD COUNTER HOWEVER TELLS ME THAT I'M ALREADY SERIOUSLY OVER-RUNNING MY CONTRACTED WORD SPACE, SO LET ME TRY TO FULFIL THE TOUR TASK IN ABBREVIATED FORM: HDA'S BUSAN MASTER PLAN A COUPLE YEARS BACK (YOU CAN'T TELL IF IT'S A BUILDING, A MOBILE PHONE, OR A WATCH-THAT'S THE IDEA); THE SCIARC INSTALLATION A YEAR OR TWO BEFORE THAT (CURVED PLUMBING SUSPENDED FROM A CEILING; COMA IN A GALLERY); THE SAN JOSE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART AND DESIGN EXTENSION CIRCA 2003 (PILLOW-Y SHAPES JAMMED ELEGANTLY INTO THE SIDE OF A POST-WAR BOX, HDA GOES 'CONTEXTUAL'). AND THERE'S PLENTY OF MORE RECENT STUFF TOO, SOME OF WHICH LOOKS A LITTLE PRICKLY. AS I'M TYPING THIS HOWEVER THE PILOT'S VOICE HAS JUST COME ON TO SAY WE'RE STARTING OUR DESCENT INTO HONG KONG AND SO I'VE GOT TO TURN THE LAPTOP OFF AND PUT MY TRAY IN ITS UPRIGHT LOCKED POSITION, WHICH ALWAYS MEANS WE'RE SUPPOSED TO STOP THINKING. AND THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A BAD IDEA. AFTER ALL (AND AS I'VE BEEN TRYING TO SAY), THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND PROJECTS LIKE THESE IS BY STOPPING THE WORDS AND ROLLING THE PICTURE. AS THE 19TH CENTURY GERMAN PHILOSOPHER SCHOPENHAUER ONCE WROTE, 'READING IS THINKING WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S HEAD'. SO (SLIPPING IN ONE LAST RIDLEY SCOTT REFERENCE) EXCHANGE THE BODY-SWAPPING FOR YOUR OWN SET OF EYES, AND MAKE THOSE THE ONES THAT COUNT. I'M SURE HDA WOULD WANT IT THAT WAY. ENJOY.

BRETT STEELE. HONG KONG, 12/05/2007 22:05:34

BRETT DIRECTS THE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND ITS SUBSIDIARY COMPANY AA PUBLICATIONS. HE IS A FOUNDER AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE AADR DESIGN RESEARCH LAB, THE INNOVATIVE TEAM-BASED POST-PROFESSIONAL M.ARCH PROGRAMME AT THE AA SCHOOL. HE DESIGNED AND BUILT AADR.NET. HE DIRECTED THE DESIGN OF AND CONTRIBUTES REGULARLY TO AASCHOOL.NET, WHICH CAPTURES IN REAL TIME THE TEACHING AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES OF THE AA SCHOOL. HE IS A PARTNER OF DAL, DESARCHLAB, AN ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE IN LONDON, AND HAS TAUGHT AND LECTURED THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA, LATIN AMERICA, EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ASIA. BRETT IS THE EDITOR OF 'NEGOTIATE MY BOUNDARY' (LONDON 2002), 'CORPORATE FIELDS' (LONDON 2005), 'D[R]L RESEARCH' (BEIJING 2005), AND 'DRL R&D: OPEN SOURCES' (FORTHCOMING, 2008), AND SERIES EDITOR OF AA WORDS: CRITICAL THINKING IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE. BRETT'S ARTICLES, INTERVIEWS AND LECTURES HAVE APPEARED IN ARCH+, AD, ARCHITECTURE REVIEW, A+U, ARCHIS, AA FILES, HARVARD DESIGN MAGAZINE, HUNCH, WORLD ARCHITECTURE, LOG, JAPAN ARCHITECT, ICON MAGAZINE, DAIDALOS, IN OTHER PUBLICATIONS; ON CNN, BBC AND IN OTHER MEDIA. A SELECTION OF HIS WRITINGS, SYLLABUSES AND LINKS ARE UPDATED DAILY AT WWW.RESARCH.NET

不需要费力探寻,我的一切都在于外表。

安迪·沃霍尔

最终,一切都回归表面。

吉勒·德勒兹 & 菲力克斯·瓜达里

六十一句话以一个段落的形式:

赫南·迪亚兹·阿隆索的暗表面

这段长度为2653个单词的段落,由一位正在返回其任教地伦敦的美国建筑师在首尔与香港之间的夜间飞行中写下,旨在为一本即将在中国出版并在更多地地方出售的书籍介绍一位居住在洛杉矶,并任教于洛杉矶和纽约的阿根廷建筑师。出版者告诉我,这段话将以中文的形式出现在你们面前,正是因为奇异的网络世界、语言以及那些使建筑知识、想象力和信息得以作为建筑师作品延伸的交汇点日复一日地循环着,一切才变得更加有趣了。总而言之,这就是我能为现今建筑性地貌以及(他们的,我们的)图像的特异性作出的微不足道的贡献,即使赫南·迪亚兹·阿隆索(简称HDA)事务所的工作人员变得越来越像一群“游手好闲,才华横溢的朋克青年”,他仍旧切实偏执,并且显而易见这正是他们所追求的。就像过去的通灵者们遭遇TERRY RILEY公司时所说的那样,或者,更贴近现今来说,就像那些啜饮着星巴克拿铁咖啡的文学评论专业的学生在DAVID FOSTER WALLACE的那些狂妄自大、自称划时代的俏皮话被戳穿后迫不及待地宣称的那样,HDA的作品就是这样:它存在于那里。这是一种建筑性肖像,它并不需要通过图解来达到让观者了解或不了解的目的(其后果之一就是除了表现某种建筑书籍的特征之外,这本书的内容无非是重复性的)。HDA的项目总体而言是一次认知的过程。它们聪明、不羁、重视自我并且追求享乐。它们古怪却并不丑陋,如果不够被称为华丽却至少是有格调的,在保留了程序化、机械化的特性的同时,他们也是美学的优秀产物。大多数时候,这些看起来与传统建筑迥然不同的项目显然更像是经历了神奇变异过程而变得巨大、坚硬而跋扈的植物物种。处于创建初期的HDA所创造的项目,即使是在现今,也就是2007年的春天看来,仍然可以作为建筑学学生以及更加优秀的年轻同龄人的研究对象(并不是像色情作品作者或是自然博物馆里那些古怪的策展人)。这些项目表述了很多HDA任何一个高分辨率、飘动

着弧线的三维效果图,以及一直渴望表述的现今许多有关建筑及其视觉习惯的内涵。我被告知,今晚我在三万两千英尺的高空口授给打字机的这些文字所要服务的对象——一部中文的“早期”半专题论著将通过机械印刷、胶封再加上硬质封面而成为一本优雅而苗条的著作,以此来作为仍然处于事业的发源期的HDA的作品“全集”。但最初必须要注意的一件事是:在这里,图片比实际的建成项目要多得多,并且那些看上去非常建筑化的作品实际上正是来源于电影“TRIFFODS之日”。正如HDA自己在一些讨论与辩论当中经常说到的那样,他与我站在大洋的两端为观众们而坚持着。很多时候他醒来“发觉自己像一个被禁锢在建筑师身体当中的电影导演”(关于这位电影导演我询问过他认为自己是谁,卡梅隆、库布里克或是阿尔莫达瓦尔——形态仍然是重要的)。他这种与大多数人相似的陈述听起来像是缺乏安全感的表现,正如对于贫穷和无法得到显赫声誉的恐惧(这两者都被广泛认为是建筑师常有的焦虑)。但是看看HDA令人叹为观止的生产力水平,我会提出完全不同的见解:这样的言论只是对他所发现的一种有效力的感觉的语言表达:一种要冲破自身表皮束缚的感觉。这种感觉与你看到他的一些作品时所产生的感觉并不完全相异。让我们将这些作品年代性地归纳起来:如果说十年前格雷戈对于建筑性外壳的前瞻性由于其所创造的“泡泡体”概念而被大众建筑传媒认为是对于20世纪50年代的同名科幻经典的纪念(当然格雷戈对此完全持不赞同态度),进而过快地转变成为一种卡通特性。最近,集中了HDA自我意识的个人至上作风不断地从一个相当特殊的古代F/X科幻影像——1979年RIDLEY SCOTT的大作:外星人——上连续迸发出来(对于下一代来说,这不正是持续地发生着的么?)。由瑞士的图像工程师所设计的那些苗条,尺度适宜同时又震慑人心的HR GIGER曲线性表面正像是由SCOTT所拍摄的电影中郑重地被血腥化(并且自由地隐匿起来的)的怪兽,而这些电影多是在与现实世界完全不同的低照度,空旷而昏暗地令人害怕的室内拍摄而成的。这是一种拍摄恐怖画面约定俗成的手法:用平缓而粗糙的背景来将观众的注意力集中在表皮不断地扭曲着、缠绕着、撕裂着的怪兽身上,而这些怪兽正是这样从其所处的平凡世界被栩栩如生地创造出来的;这是一种根据观众自己的感知力的可靠性来发生作用,并令观众的感知和焦虑高度集中的视觉魔术。这种亮前景与暗背景的二元制度(这一概念被古代的大师们初次提及;还记得那些戈雅、维米尔以及ETAL的本土画像么)同时催生了现代建筑渲染的原则和传统。这些原则和传统在当代的复兴让人们重新回到了能够在密斯的炭笔绘画中看到的前PHOTOSHOP时代,密斯正是用这种他自己所认同的方式来尝试并传达其全玻璃的弗雷德里克拉塞大楼的反射特