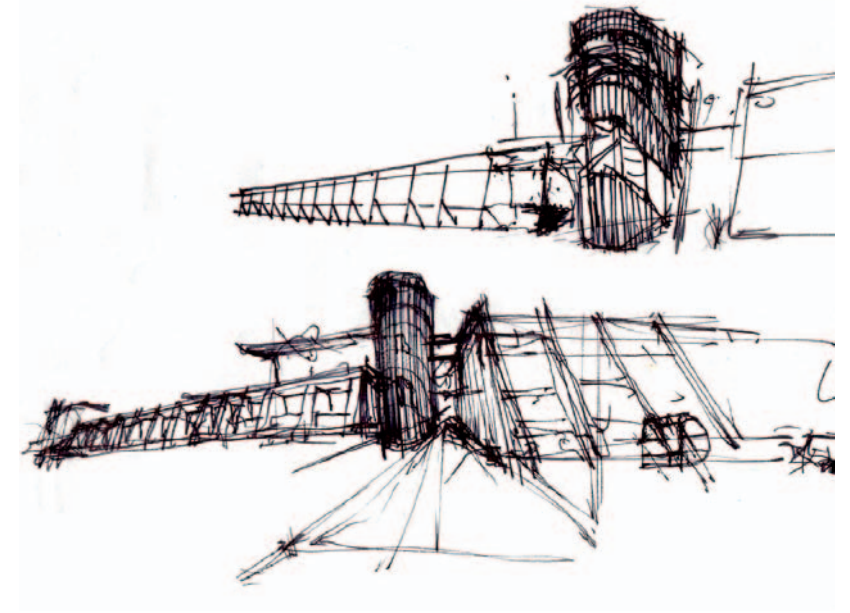


'CELLULES'

social structuring in casa moderna

nathan werner

masters thesis : 25 august 2004



'Cellules' - Social Structuring in Casa Maderni

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic
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requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture

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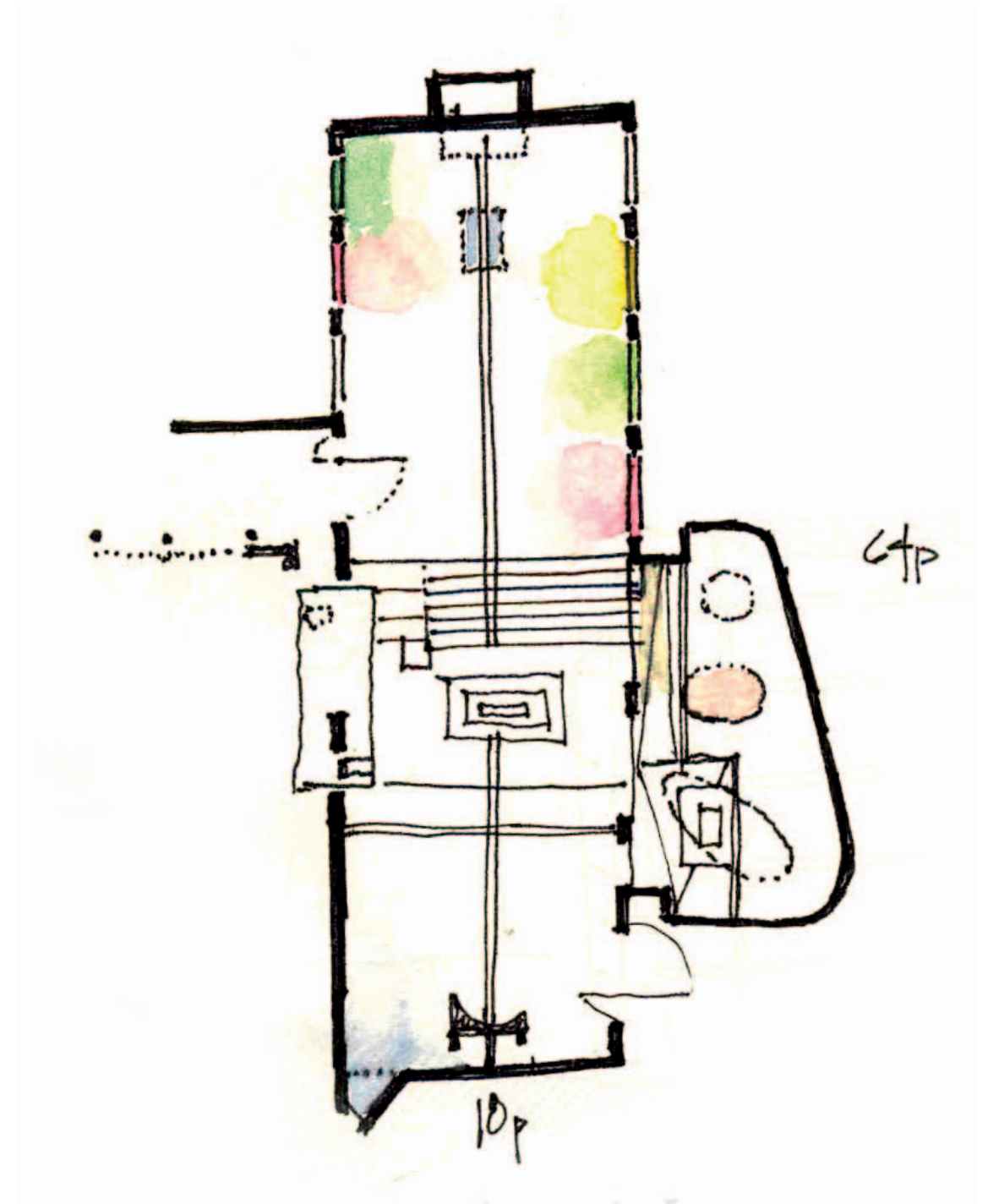
It is a remarkable thing to have been driven and influenced by the work of one man. And even though I accept that it has been the keystone of my architectural foundation, I still would not regard it as an obsession, instead, I prefer to think of it as a landmark that I navigate by, whenever I feel myself going adrift.

I am talking of course, about the work of **Le Corbusier**.

I wish to express my gratitude to everyone who has helped or inspired me throughout the course of my architectural career, specifically the members of my committee: Heiner for your incessant remarks of being fearless in life and architecture, Jacques for your fresh eyes on ritualistic manners of human behavior and great conversations, Bill and Ron for coming in so late and still granting me your utmost deepest thoughts.

I also wish to thank my colleagues in work and school for always being the quiet but equally as important army of critiques and support.

Finally I owe thanks to my parents, brother, family and friends for all your love and belief in me that this was all possible from my most humble beginnings, today, and beyond.



[a b s t r a c t]

How can architecture encourage and intensify a limited period of life? I examine this by composing an austere cell for living, focused on the interaction of materials, natural light, and human movement through specific distinct sequences. Casa Maderni in Riva San Vitale Switzerland serves as the starting point to receive the consequences of my design with: a new dining room, library, renovation of existing structures, but primarily a new living wing created at the rear of the property.

I focus on the juxtaposition between the introverted private realm of the living cell and the public realm of the dining room. A series of spatial sequences through new and existing building parts is conceived as material manipulations to mediate connections at different scales, combined with light and color to emphasize important moments in sequence. This sequence of architectural moments of public and private are choreographed at a larger scale in a master plan.

Although silently assumed here, the role of architecture as a pedagogical tool can ultimately only be gauged through reality and human interaction. The architecture of Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Carlo Scarpa assisted greatly through precedence in my architectural decisions.

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