Mark Ramirez
July 30, 1996

For Partial
Fulfillment of a
Masters of
Architecture I
at Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University

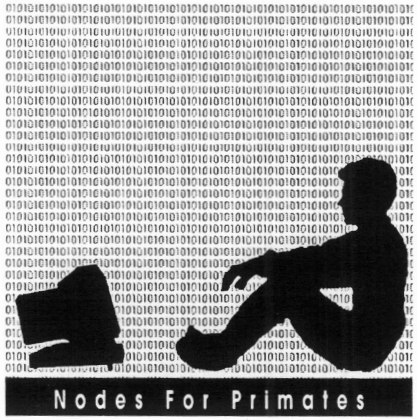
Committee Members

D.E. Egger, Committee Chair

William Galloway

Dr. Walter Schaer

Dr. Barbara Schaer



Nodes For Primates

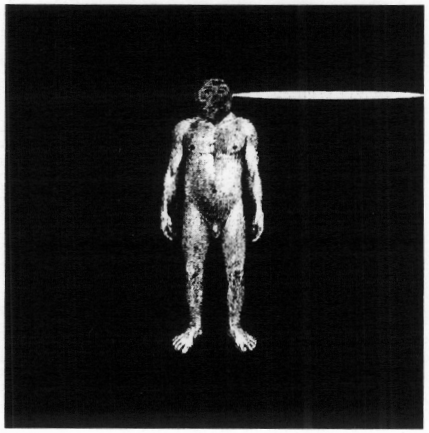
A Fictional Manifesto

Preface

The following document is for partial fulfillment of a *Masters of Architecture I* at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Two visions are presented; one of a utopian future, and one of a nilistic future. Somewhere in between these scenarios lies a truth. I have attempted to weave a *story* and allow the reader to navigate through these polarities with the hope that the contrasting visions give clarity.

Mark Ramirez: April 28, 1996

"to weave a story"



How could we let this happen? They are going to put in another one of those Mitsubishi prefab carbon storage units #HUM.5.2./10. Five years ago Mitsubishi's former CEO, Ed Fukeyama, built a billion of these units, hoping to capture a then growing but now defunct market in cellular phone users. The units were custom designed to accommodate frenzied white collar whores, who, unlike their more primal and carnal sisters of the flesh, had a nymphotechnic urge to be connected and surrounded by as much techno-techno as possible. Of course, this coincided with the televangelical rise of the Sons of Luddite cult, no, excuse me ... religion, which single-handedly managed to bring us to a more peaceful and balanced state free of phones, free of computers, and free of general electronic equipment. The Sons of Ludite not only showed us how to be free of the "sins of technology" but of government and the military war industry. After that, it only took the Canadians two years to annex most of North America. Now Mitsubishi free of Fukeyama, and I might add, Fukeyama free of a pinkie finger, is trying to unload as many of these units as possible.

Text by: Mark Ramirez

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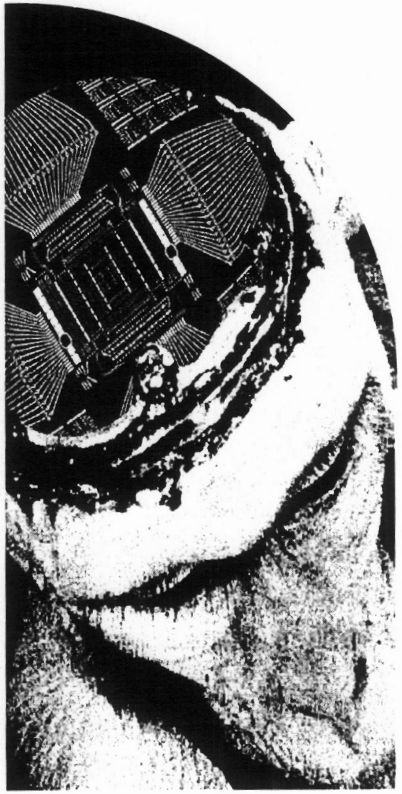
Models

Who

Human

Machine



Brain: portion of the vertebrates central nervous system that constitutes the organ of thought and neural coordination.,encluding all the higher nervous center, receiving impulses from the sense organs, and interpreting, and correlating these with stored impressions to formulate motor impulses that ultimately control all vital activities.
Webster's Dictionary

Cyberspace: concept inspired by William Gibson's science fiction novel, Neuromancer. Cyberspace has come to represent both our fears and hopes for the latest wave in the development of the information age.

Network: fabric or structure of threads, cords, or wires that cross each other at regular intervals and are knotted or secured at the crossings.
Webster's Dictionary

I decree-
THE DEATH OF
THE HOME

In no uncertain terms will the house, as we know it, survive the next fifty years. It will bend and strain and under the new forces of the information age and finally succumb to the will of the market and the people who drive our consumer nation.

I propose a new institution which has no accepted name yet, I will call it simply *shelter*. It is not a home and not a house, it has neither the baggage nor the imagery associated with the place that we all have in common:

WHERE
WE LIVE.

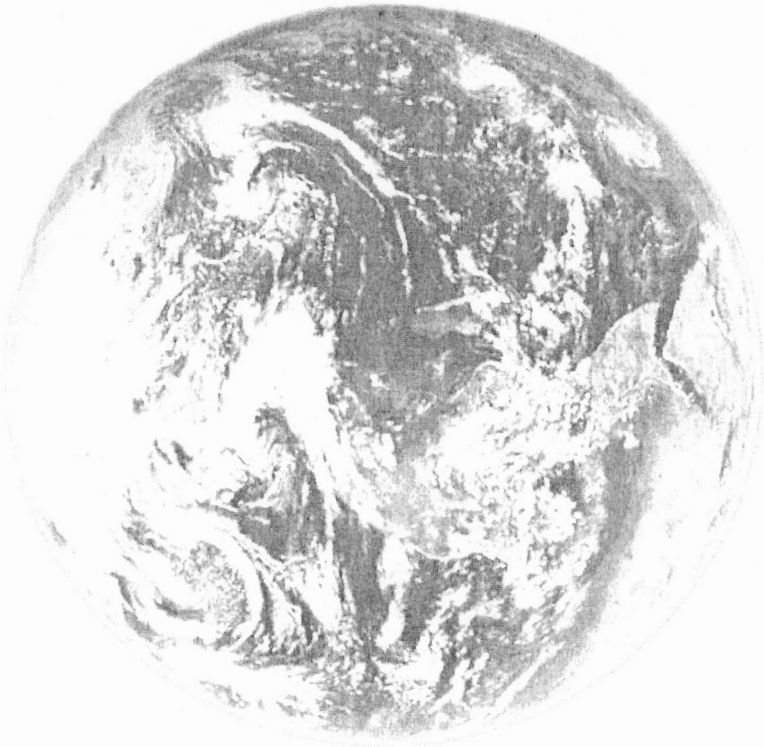
This institution is simply a place that protects the *inside* from that which is the *outside*, it provides shelter for those who reside within its confines.

The *outside* is a hostile place from which we need protection from the

elements
environment
society
each other
ourselves

which conspire to destroy our lives.

Within bitsphere communities, there will be sub-networks at a smaller scale still- that of architecture. Increasingly, computers will meld seamlessly into the fabric of buildings and buildings themselves will become computers- the outcome of a long evolution. *City of Bits- William J. Mitchell*



We do not live on the earth, we live in the earth, in that narrow band of space between the geological world and the stratosphere, between Gaia and the God(s) above. The realization of our place in the cosmos was the knowledge of the ancients, a concept lost from the memory of modern humans.

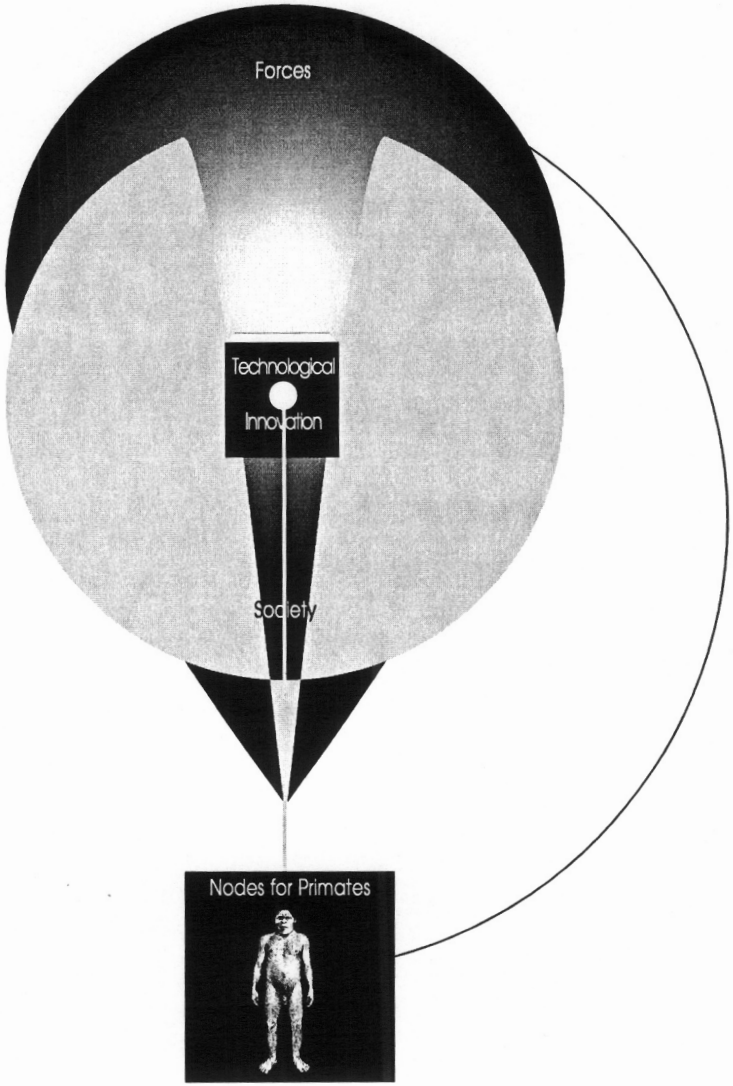
Abstract

Where

Humans find themselves in increasingly isolated conditions and locked into interaction with mechanical devices. In order to survive in this environment we must question what it is to live at the end of the 20th century.

What are we to do if our worst fears for the future come true and what structures can we create to respond to a hostile living environment?

Parameters



How

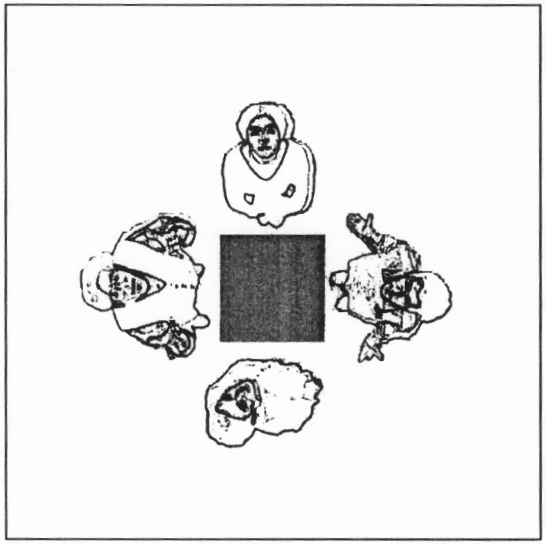
A Forces acting upon society

B Society reacts giving rise to conditions that are conducive to a technological innovation

C Innovation is born

D Innovation then becomes a force acting upon society

Authors Note



Cast of Characters

Forces

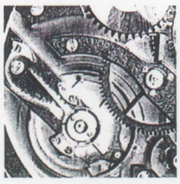
Four friends

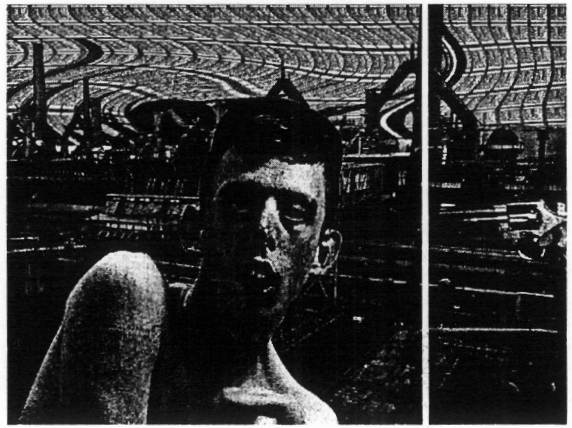
in the act of

committing the

unthinkable:

COMMUNICATING

Forces	Parameters	Traditional	Proposed
Scientific Models of Thought	With the inadequacy of Newtonian physics or Cartesian thought we see a return to a more balanced notion of science. For the first time in two hundred years we see the return of the philosopher scientist and a mending of the rift between the two disciplines. This has allowed for the development of alternative ways of seeing humans place within both the cosmos and the world we live in.	 Newton	Chaos
Post Structuralism		" Logocentrism, accordingly, is the view, held to be dominant in philosophy and in the most "serious" activities, that there is such a thing as the objective truth about the word. Moreover, whether or not this truth can ever be recaptured, logocentrism is supposed to include the desire to return to it, and to confront it directly, without distortion, once and for all". *Truth and Consequences- By Alexander Nehamas*	"Deconstruction is not itself an architectural metaphor. Not only is he (Derrida) suspicious of metaphors; it is also the case that Deconstruction does not amount to a simple dismantling, it is at the same time- and in the Nietzschen sense-affirmation" *Andrew Benjamin, Derrida, Architecture and Philosophy*
Cosmopolitanism and a Shrinking World	Wang was finished, he had, enough. The job was too stressful and his boss was an ass. How is it that the idiots in the world always manage to make it to middle management and get in the way of progress. So he quit. Already, his friend at Merryl Lynch has arranged a new job for him in the C-LANG research division. For now though, a little vacation is in order. His grandfather, the perpetual Taoist, always used to say that the magnitude of the Great Wall always used to put the complexities of life in perspective and give him clarity. In less than 12 hours Wang will be back home in Beijing, thanks to $300 and Boeing's new hydrogen engine. *Text By Mark Ramirez*	Transatlantic Air Travel	Virtual Travel
Materialism?	Technology, may finally have achieved its initial promise! That is, to make our lives easier by providing for all the daily objects needed for survival at a cost of production so inexpensive that these objects have almost no value as a physical entity.	Standard Coffee Cup	Pitcher by Allessi
The Demise of the Beast of Modernity	Factors that will contribute to the demise of the automobile. A: The virtual or home office B: Increased use of mail order or computer shopping C: Higher gasoline prices D: Suburban culture that includes close access to basic and specialty goods All this translates into less use of the road system.	Volkswagen Polo	Bent Metal
Public and Private	Try to imagine a place where you can always be reached, always be found and never be alone. In this place you do your work, your socialization, your shopping, your dating, your sex, your entertainment, your learning, your teaching, and your research. The question then becomes what happens when your want to be alone or be in private.	You are alone when you want to be alone	... I can not wait to get outside and be alone. I have been on this computer for the past six hours trying to work out the production problem. I just wish people would leave me alone that way I could get some work done. As long as I am on the net anyone can call on me. Sue to brag about Dallas beating Washington last week, John with a new proposal for that solving the flow regulation of the waste from plant #5, Mom asking why have I not brought the kids over lately, all those mindless ads promising greater efficiency at reduced costs, some consulting agency trying to gain contracts, and the endless flow of imagery colors and sounds. I just want to get outside the net where no one can find me! *Text By Mark Ramirez*
Communication and Virtual Reality	Virtual reality and a revolution in human communication promises to drastically alter how we live, work and interact. However, in reality , a working Virtual Reality and the infrastructure that supports it is years away. As with all fiction, the reality of the future promises to be far more sober than our imagination would lead us to believe. Fighting the development of this technology is both simple economic feasibility as well as a basic human need for physical contact with other humans. Only if virtual reality provides a "new" ability to communicate will it ever succeed.	Communication	
Imagery	The continued influence of the image within both pop culture and the general populace will lead to a more superficial easily influenced world. Associated with this world is a complete denial of ideals that are intangible or are not associated with a visual stimuli. Such an example of this denial is the MTV culture and the generation of children who have been raised within it. Their view of the world is dominated by a steady stream of disconnected visual images showing a perfect world of beauty, entertainment and youth culture.	This is not a face (or a pipe)	This is a face (but not a pipe)



a s h r i e k

■ Chapter1: Plot

Problem

Proposition

Solution

Nodes

Skeleton

Mask

Bastion

A Problem

Nodes For Primates

The millennial generation faces an uncertain future as we near adulthood; due to ecological disaster, strong social pressures, and the physical deterioration of their communities. How are we to survive in the uncertain environment of the next century?

Basic Human Needs

Fresh Water
Clean Air
Food
Shelter

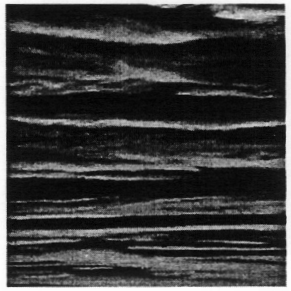
Culture
Community
Conversation

Ecological Disaster

The sea is warming, the plankton dying; floods are sweeping the land. In California, the climate is acting in a peculiar way. So, too, in Antarctica, where unlooked-for flowers are blooming as the ice shelves disintegrate. At the other end of the Earth, stunted trees recalled to life after decades of arctic cold prepare to send forth their seed. And in Southern Africa, it looks as though the rains will fail. Again.

All over the world, there is something odd about the weather. This is always true; the weather is, by its nature, capricious, as farmers and sailors know. There may be nothing out of the ordinary about its latest outrages. But there may be something very un-ordinary about them. They may all be linked to a climatic conspiracy.

"Reading the Patterns" The Economist April 1st-7th 1995



Social Pressures

NEW YORK- The leading cause of death for people at work in New York city is not construction accidents, car crashes or machinery malfunctions. It is homicide."
N.Y Problem ,Herald Tribune Feb 26, 1995

LIVERPOOL- Neighbors recall watching him roller-blade past the curving row of tumble-down two-story apartments where he had lived with his mother and six brothers, a chubby cheeked 10 year old with close-cropped hair who, like so many other boys in Liverpool's tough walton neighborhood, had seemed much older. But these people say they still cannot see him as a suspect in a murder or comprehend the fact that the boy who used to run errands for them and play with their own children now stands accused of abducting a toddler from a shopping mall.

In a Tough Liverpool, Herald Tribune Feb 25, 1995

Deterioration of Community

"All of a sudden, there was prostitution in the alley outside my house," recalls Ann Szabo, who has lived all her life in the leafy Five Oaks area of Dayton. Drug-dealers had moved in, too. During the day, the once quiet neighborhood had the roar of speeding through-traffic; at night, it had the sound of gunshots ... It was both those who lived there and the local police who felt a neighborhood under siege.

"Good Fences" The Economist March 25-31 1995

a solution for living

Proposition B

to make a shelter

Single Habitational Unit

A house
is the physical embodiment of a culture and what it values. We visualize how our ancestors lived by visiting the places they walked, opening the doors to their homes, and by sitting in their chairs. The home becomes an artifact that reflects the values of those that built it.

By questioning the nature of the house and by proposing an alternate institution, this project addresses the hostile forces we will face in the new millennium. Instead of falling prey to the traditional defaults of suburban housing design, I propose the establishment of four seeds: Node, Skeleton, Mask, and Bastion. During the design of a house these seeds are "planted" within the project and local site forces affect how the project develops into a shelter.

Find Refuge

To provide shelter for a natural environment that is deteriorating:

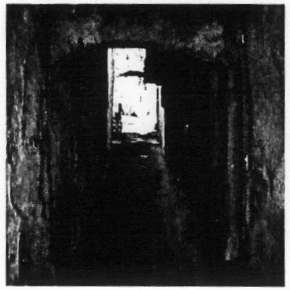
Global warming, overpopulation, acid rain, air pollution, deforestation, noise pollution, pesticide resistant insects, and the general destruction of nature.

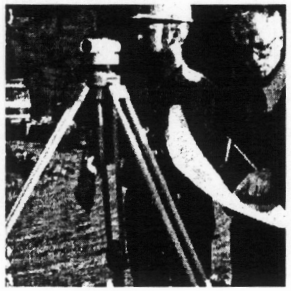
Prevent Destruction

To counter the deterioration of human settlement by creating an institution (an alternate way of living) whose very existence prevents any further destruction.

A Holistic View

To understand that the solutions to the problems of today are not as easy as simply dealing with the crisis at hand. The answer to one problem may be the catalyst for the development of another.





... an alternate view of living

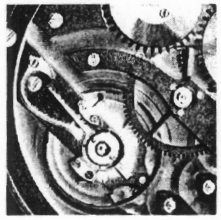
Solution C

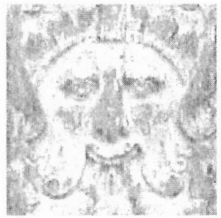
We need to define...

family A group of people living within close proximity of each other for the purpose of mutual support and self preservation
-Mark Ramirez

dwelling To be a human means to be on earth as a mortal. It means to dwell"..."But 'on earth' already means 'under the sky.' Both of these also mean 'remaining before the divinities' and include a 'belonging to men's being with one another.' By a primal oneness the four-earth and sky, divinities and mortals belong together in one ... Dwelling, insofar as it keeps or secures the four-fold in things, is, as this keeping, a building.
-Martin Heidiegger: Poetry, Language, Thought

house (house; for v. house) n., 1. a building for human beings to live in; specific., a) a building or part of a building occupied by one family or tenant., dwelling place ... d) a building where a group of people live as a unit
- Websters New World Dictionary 1988





Four seeds planted on

a site

Node

Skeleton

Mask

Bastion

...and allowed to grow into a house

...in order to survive in the future.

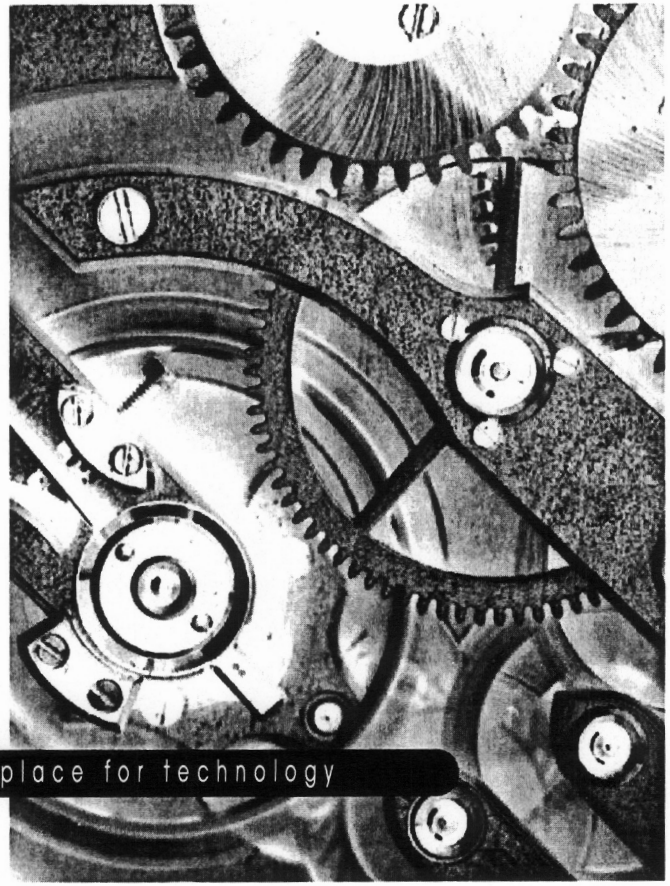
Node

We must make ...

The Node is the focal point of one's daily life, the place where one interacts with both the physical world and the digital city. The Node is an autonomous unit which relates to the other units in The Network and to the housing or skeleton that supports it. Within the unit, a person may satisfy many of the needs of human existence. These include both mundane acts such as bathing or sleeping and more cerebral activities such as entertainment, study, or work. The guiding principle for the definition of the Node is that it may only be occupied by a single individual and therefore the Node may take on any shape. For this specific project, however, it presents itself as a cube.

" 'The matrix has its roots in primitive arcade games,' said the voice over, ' in early graphics programs and military experimentation with cranial jacks.' On the Sony, a two-dimensional space war fades behind a forest of mathematically generated ferns, demonstrating the spatial possibilities of logarithmic spiral; cold blue military footage burned through, lab animals wired into test systems, helmets feeding into fire control circuits of tanks and war planes. ' Cyberspace. A consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts... A graphic representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the nonspace of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding...' "

Excerpt By: William Gibson, Neuromancer



... a place for technology

Mask

To Present

The Mask is the formal face that the shelter presents to the outside world. The Mask can both protect the users in the Node and allow them to view the activity transpiring around them. The role of the Mask is similar to that of a traditional facade, i.e., presenting a face to the other members of the city or community. The traditional facade was a reflection of the wealth or status that a family had obtained and acted as the separation between the private realm of the shelter and the public realm of the street. Unlike a traditional facade, the Mask is completely detached from the other elements of the shelter. This detachment is done so as not to distract from its primary role: to act as a visual shield.

Whenever I visit expensive new tract houses, I end up thinking about Cadillacs. Not today's gently curved, almost anonymous Cadillacs, but rather, the 4,700-pound behemoths of 1959, the apex of the late-fifties Detroit Baroque. Aesthetically, the vintage Caddy and today's upper-priced production house share the same bombastic yearning for the supper-deluxe effect. Where the 1959 Cadillacs sprouted superfluous, chromed tail fin, the 1990 house sprout gratuitous hips and gables. Where Cadillacs proclaimed their impressiveness with 325-horse power engines and rumbling dual exhausts, houses try to wow the passerby with haughty two-story entrances and a promiscuous display of round-arched windows.

Philip Langdon, Dissecting the American House, P/A October 1995

a formal face

Skeleton

Think Heavy
Think Concrete
Think Steel

Authors Note

Between Matter and Spirit

The Skeleton is essentially a grounding and supporting structure, that serves as a metaphoric armature which "holds" the building down and prevents it from "floating away". All movement takes place from within, and vertical ascension is celebrated, connecting the earth to the sky.

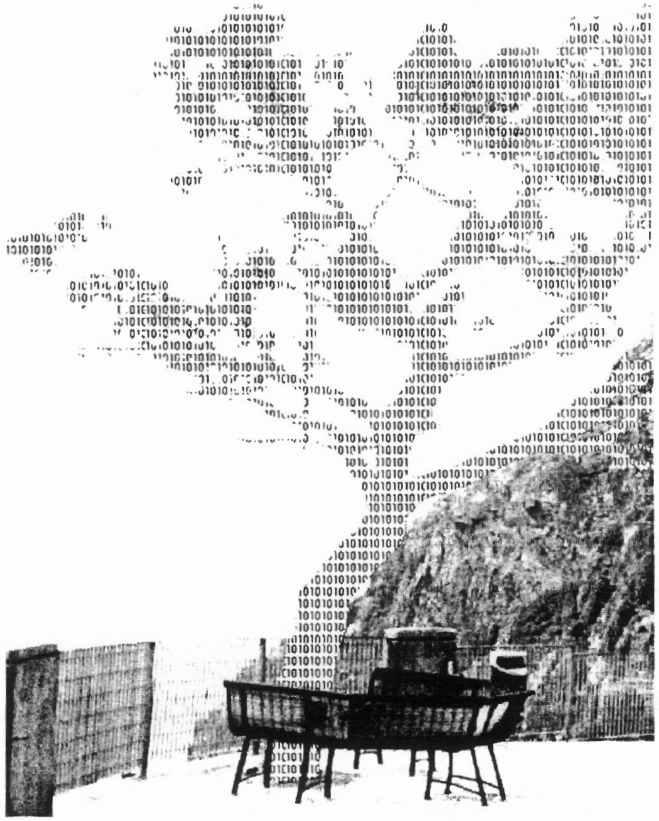
The Skeleton moves in the same realm as the tribal hut or an early Greek temple. The temple at its base level was a clearing in a forest, the point where darkness opened up to reveal humans to the gods and heaven above. In a similar manner, the hut was an embodiment of a humans relationship to the world, governed by four walls (the cardinal points), a vaulted roof (the dome of heaven), and raised ground (where humans meet the earth).

The Skeleton rises out of the ground to hold the sky while at the same time capturing a piece of it. It has a much longer life expectancy than the nodes, ranging somewhere between seventy to a hundred years.

" Roaring, these dinosaurs rise from the ground triumphant, knowing that they will stand as tall and as straight in one hundred years as they do today. With a fundamental belief in their immortality that all teenagers possess, these youthful structures stand firmly anchored holding up the sky."

The quote comes from an advertisement claiming to understand the significance of the modern living condition. The advertiser's hidden message brings forth the idea that because they possess this divine knowledge of living, you should buy their node housing. I am sure they know what it is to live! However, I have to admit that the concrete skeleton does have a special charm, especially before they are clad with the neo-classical facade. After all, they seem to talk as if they were reading the pain in the earth and whisper secrets about the natives who used to inhabit this valley.

-Text By Mark Ramirez



Bastion

As the family unit begins to strain under the new forces within our changing society, we find it increasingly difficult to maintain what is defined as the traditional nuclear family. As both "Grandma" moves back in and "Jr." will not leave, housing has to maintain a certain degree of flexibility. Many children live with their grandparents, with step-parents, with mom's girlfriend or dad's boyfriend and a hundred other combinations. Added to this uncertainty is the new tendency toward more autonomous life styles, in which " little Susie" can go days without speaking to any kind of parental authority. The key lies not in fighting against single habitational units, but in preserving the last few interactive arenas that the family possesses. These arenas include both eating and food preparation as well as the basic need for human socialization. The Bastion is designed on the belief that if people are denied physical contact with other humans for a significant portion of the day, they will look forward to, and enthusiastically engage in, any social or interactive activity.

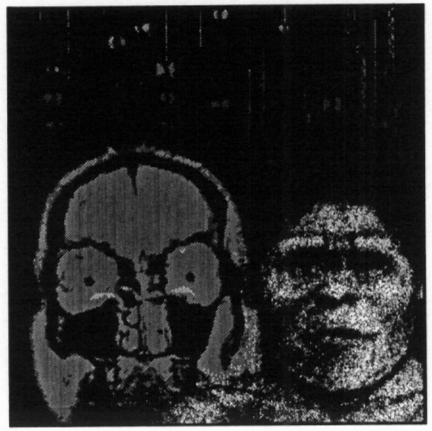
The more we are separated from people...

Hiro Protagonist and Vitaly Chernobyl, roommates, are chilling out in their home, a spacious 20- by-30 in a U-Stor-It in Inglewood, California. The room has a concrete slab floor, corrugated steel walls separating it from the neighboring units, and - this is a mark of distinction and luxury - a roll-up steel door that faces northwest, giving them a few red rays at times like this, when the sun is setting over LAX. ... But there are worse places to live. There are much worse places right here in this U-Stor It. Only the big units like this one have their own doors. Most of them are accessed via a communal loading dock that leads to a maze of wide corrugated steel hallways and freight elevators. These are slum housing, 5 by-10s and 10 by 10s where Yanoama tribes people cook beans and parboil fist fulls of coca leaves over heaps of burning lottery tickets

Excerpt By: Neal Stephenson, Snow Crash

...the more we will seek out places to interact with people

Architecture ?



The only stability

is in accepting

UNCERTAINTY

Organizations have to be open to

HERESY

Pierre A Wack, WIRED 2.11

■ Chapter 2: Place

Site

Drawings

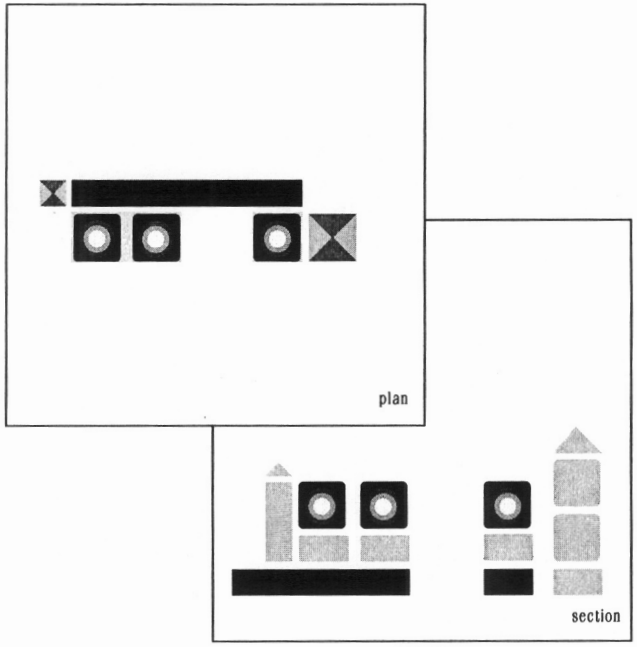
Nodes

Moving from Theory to a Project requires a leap of faith, for the process is not linear or rational. As a shaman conjures the spirits of the earth through the story, so does the architect, making magic from the ingredients of form and space

site 1

Boundaries

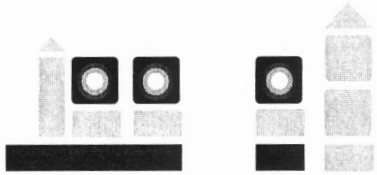
Upon analysis of the site one finds several aspects of the town striking. The first of these is the boundaries of the town and the structures that have been erected to define its edges. Nodes for Primates rests on the edge of the town of Riva San Vitale Switzerland and is bordered by the Lake Lugano and a small river, feeding the lake. Sitting adjacent to the site is a park belonging to the neighboring town of Capalago and a private garden which is protected by a two and a half meter wall. It is also important to not forget the presence of the mountains, for Riva San Vitale sits firmly nestled in a lower valley of the Alps.

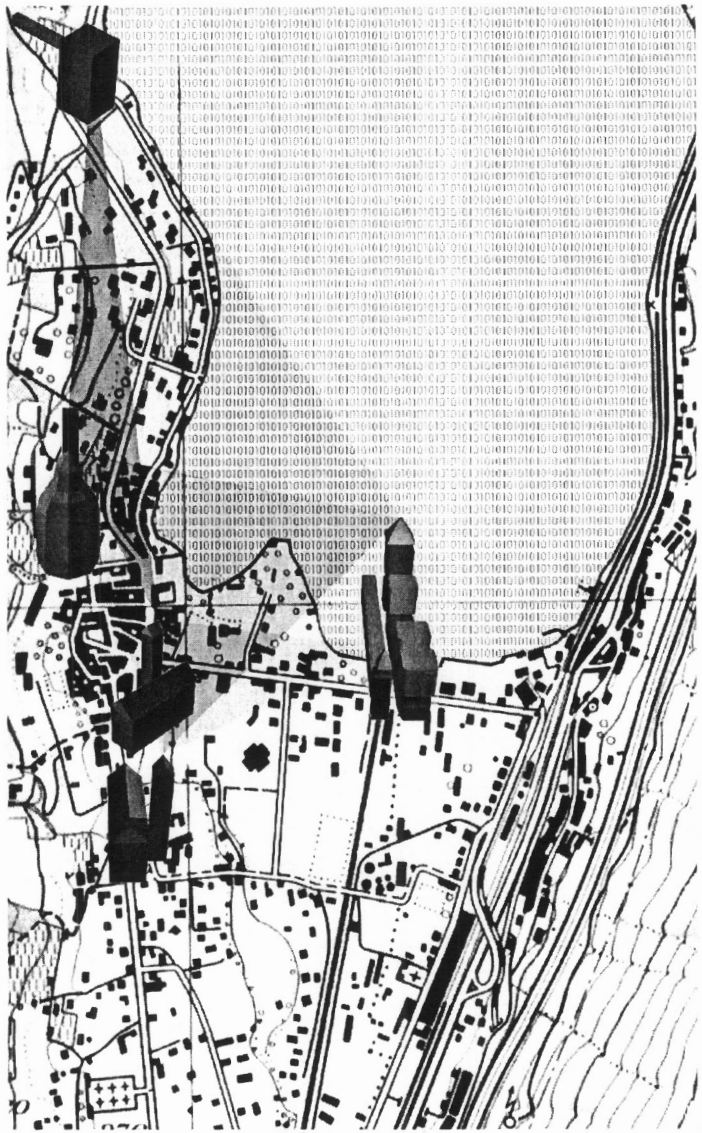


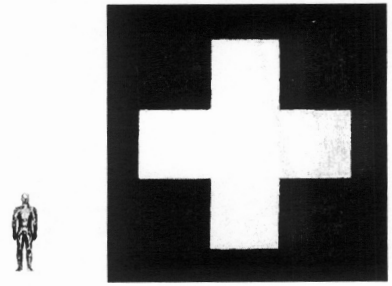
site 2

Tower and Territory

Given the importance of the location Nodes for Primates will hold in the overall comunale it is important to look at how the other edges of the town have been treated. These edges are not treated as a line or a definite boundary but as the loosely defined territory of the comunale. This territory is defined principally by a visual marker or tower of some kind. Usually this takes shape in some sort of religious edifice: either a small chapel, shrine, or full church. As is common in the region, many of the villages in the area define the outer limits of their territory with a religious structure. In Riva San Vitale we find a private church to the North (Santa Croce), a small Baroque church to the South, and the main church closer to the center of the village. The western edge of the town is bounded by Mount San Giorgio; however, the eastern edge where Nodes for Primates is located is left undefined.







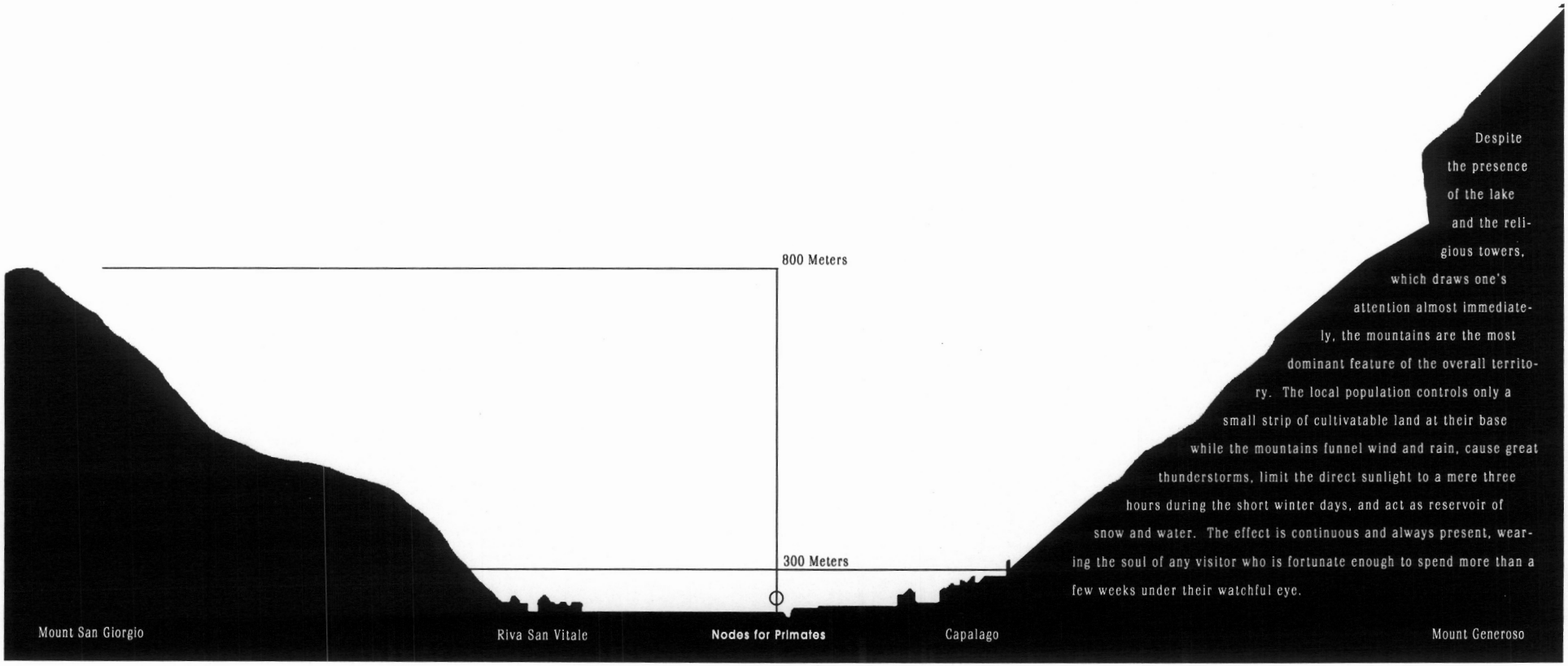
Switzerland

Ticino Canton

Mendrisioto Region

Site 3

Enclosure



Despite the presence of the lake and the religious towers, which draws one's attention almost immediately, the mountains are the most dominant feature of the overall territory. The local population controls only a small strip of cultivatable land at their base while the mountains funnel wind and rain, cause great thunderstorms, limit the direct sunlight to a mere three hours during the short winter days, and act as reservoir of snow and water. The effect is continuous and always present, wearing the soul of any visitor who is fortunate enough to spend more than a few weeks under their watchful eye.

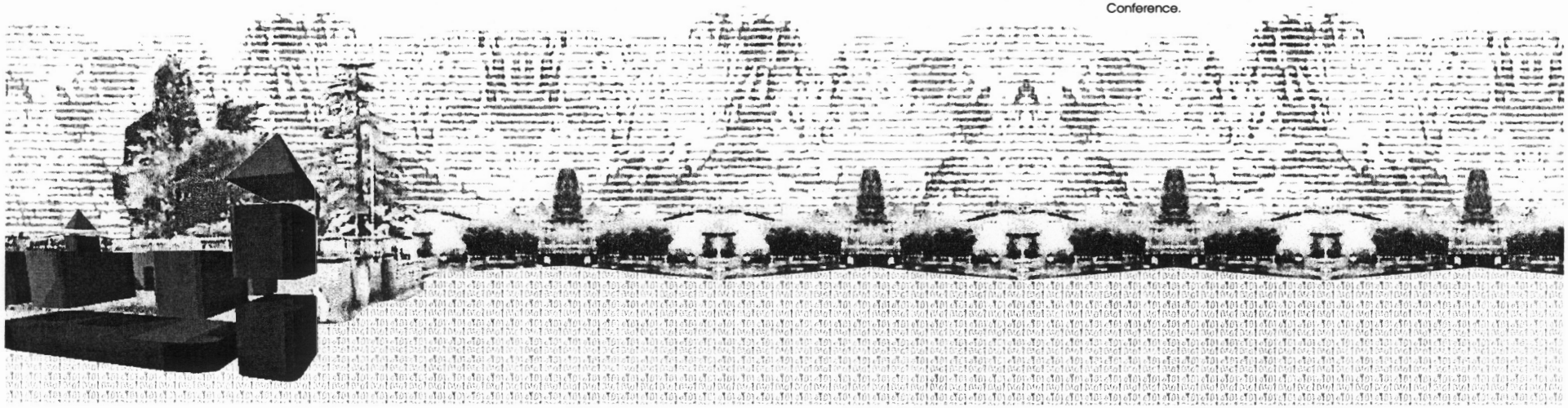
Site 4

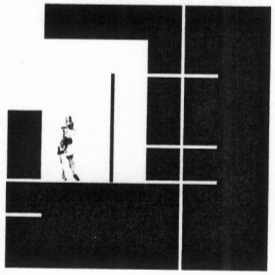
Path

Before the construction of the roads and superhighways, which now run up and down many of the valleys in the region, the lake was the principle means of transportation between the local towns and villages. Riva San Vitale, sitting at the end of Lake Lugano, holds a special place as one of the two towns from which boat travel can begin. Capalago is the other town and its name gives us a clue into its early role : CAPA-del-LAGO or END OF THE LAKE in Italian. Riva San Vitale, as is the case with most towns in the region, turns its back on the lake choosing instead to focus on an internal Piazza and Town Center, or Nucleo. While the lake was always an important feature in daily life it did not have the stigma that we now associate with lakes as a tourist attraction or a place of recreation. We must remember that the lake was a place where one fished, dumped garbage, and transportated cargo. While much of the lakefront has been developed into summer home by wealthy Northerners, the memory of the lake's past functions are still strong in the minds and attitudes of the local inhabitants.

From my own position, site is nonexistent: It never existed, it doesn't exist. It's only, as Derrida yesterday tried in every detailed way to expose, a kind of political delaying tactic. But the fact that site doesn't exist does not make it any less of a concern to us. It might even make it more of a concern.

Daniel Libeskind -Architect,
Transcript from ANY Magazine
Conference.





The easiest way to

predict the future

is to invent it.

Marc Weisner,

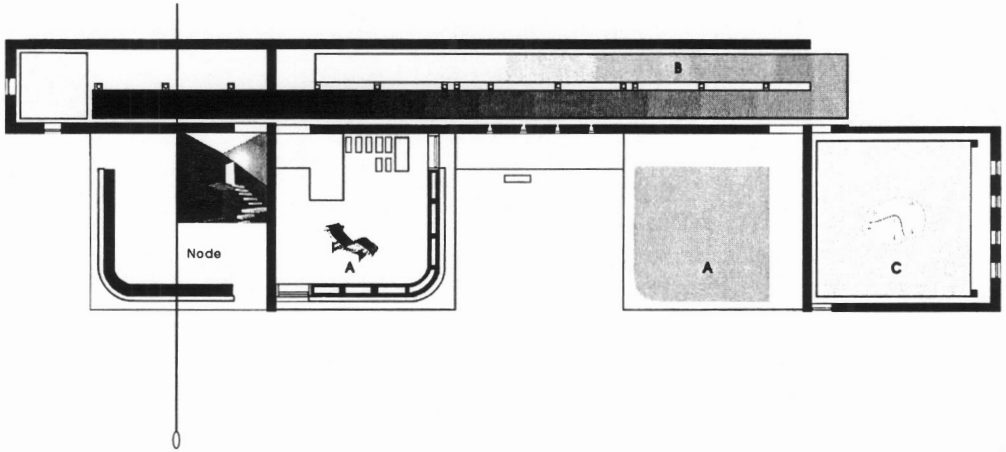
Xerox Parc Labs

5 Organization

Site: Riva San Vitale, Switzerland

Project House

Program Three Nodes



first floor plan

A Single Habitational Unit

B Access Ramp

C Kitchen

D Garage

E Boat Dock

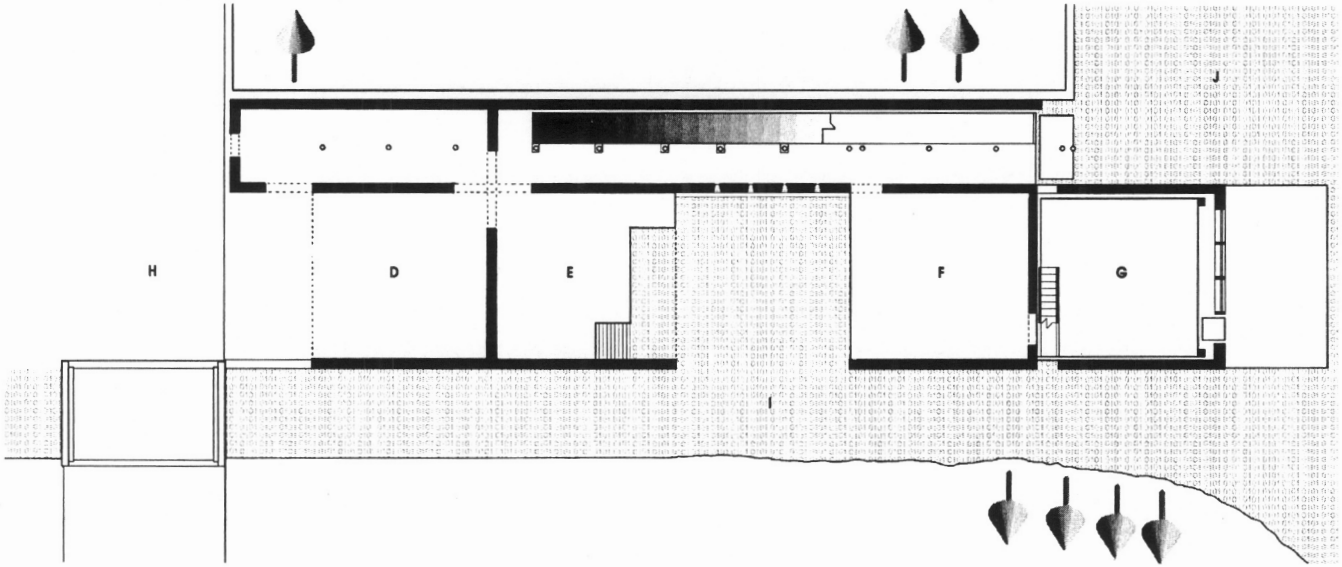
F Veranda

G Sitting Room

H Road

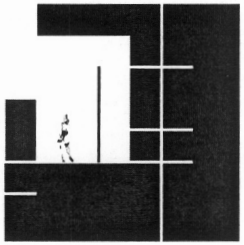
I Stream

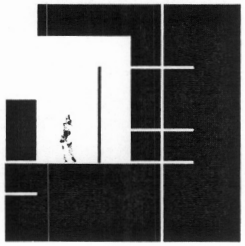
J Lake

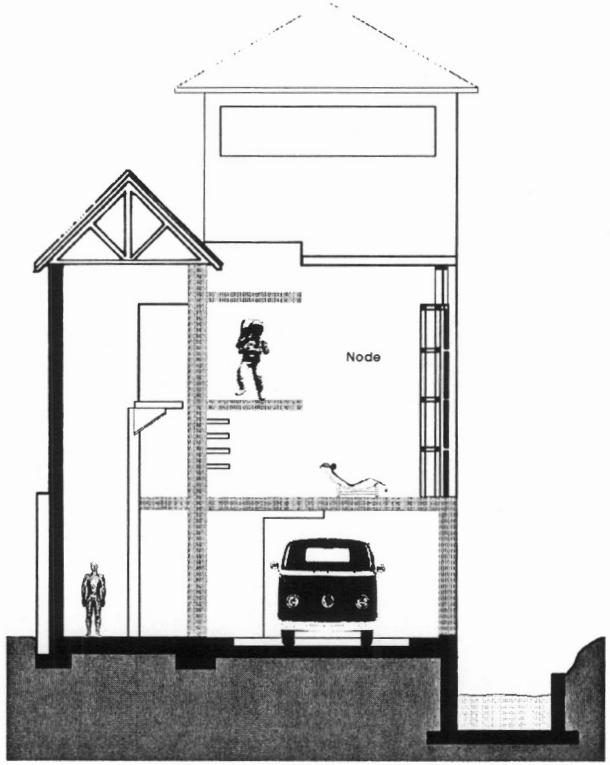


ground plan

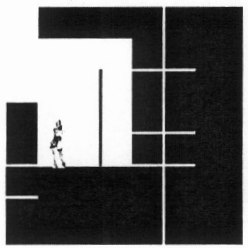
Project 6

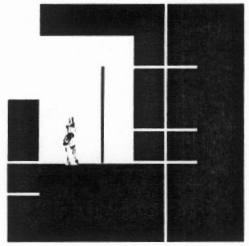




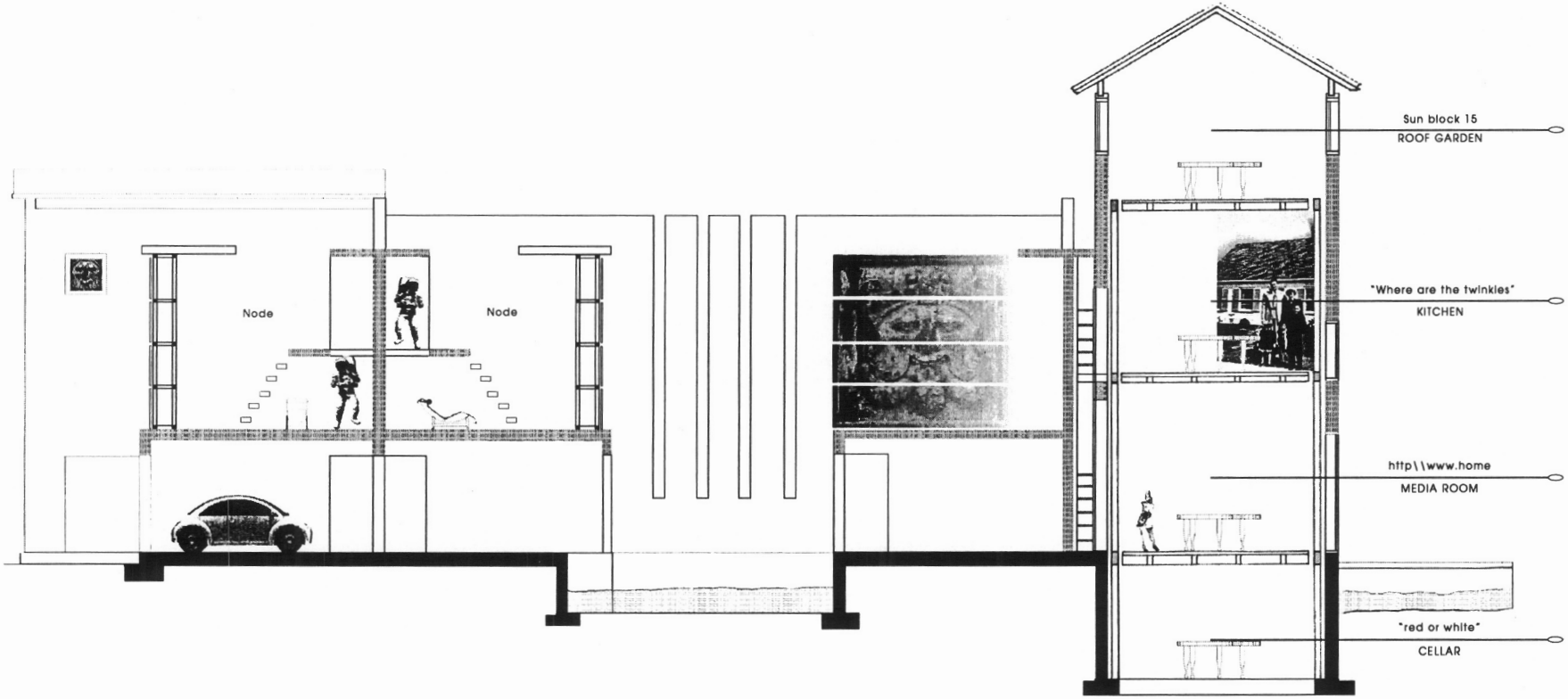


cross section





Project 7



longitudinal section

Images

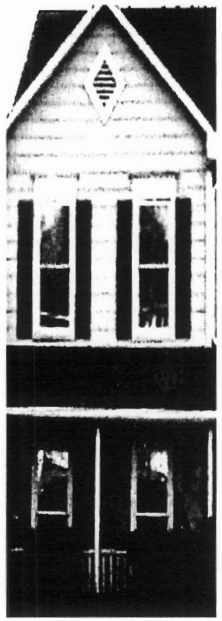
What does a *home* look like?

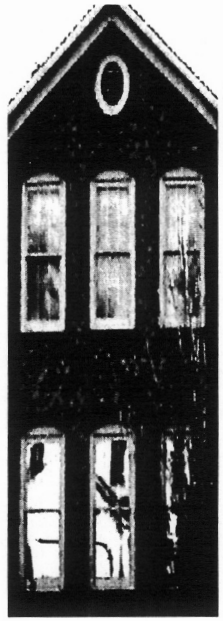
What does a *house* look like?

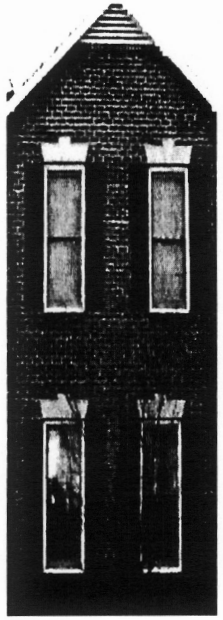
What does *a node* look like?

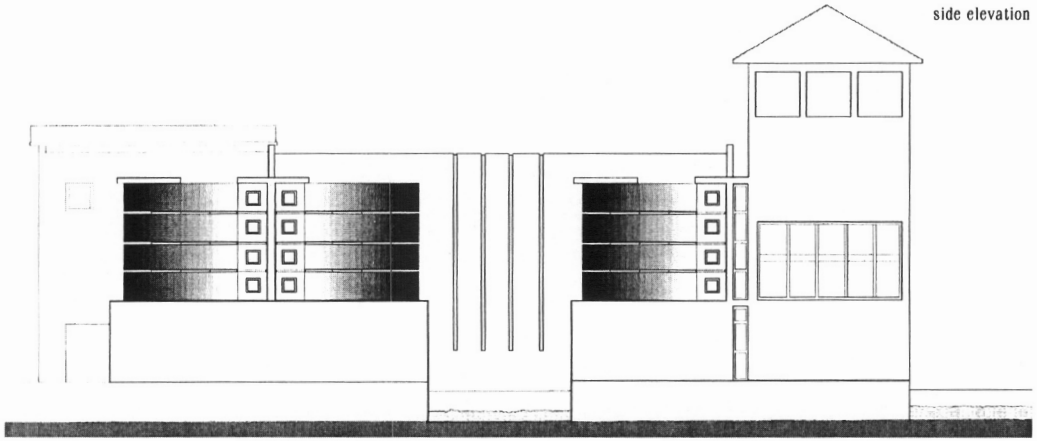
What does *shelter* look like?

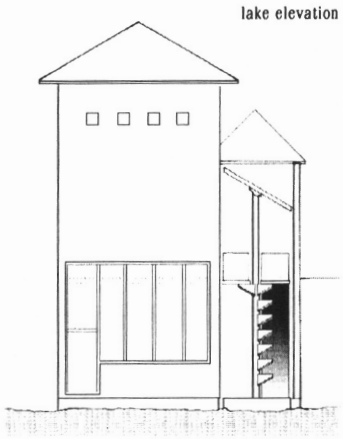
What does an *image* look like?

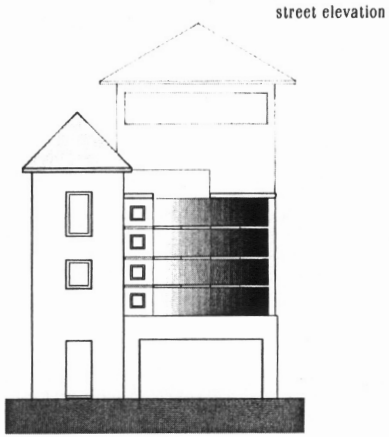












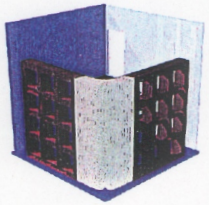
For postmodernists like Turkle, no unitary truth resides anywhere. There is only local knowledge, contingent and provisional. And it will have to do, since it is all we have. The surface is what matters, to be explored by navigation, not by opening up the hood and peering inside.

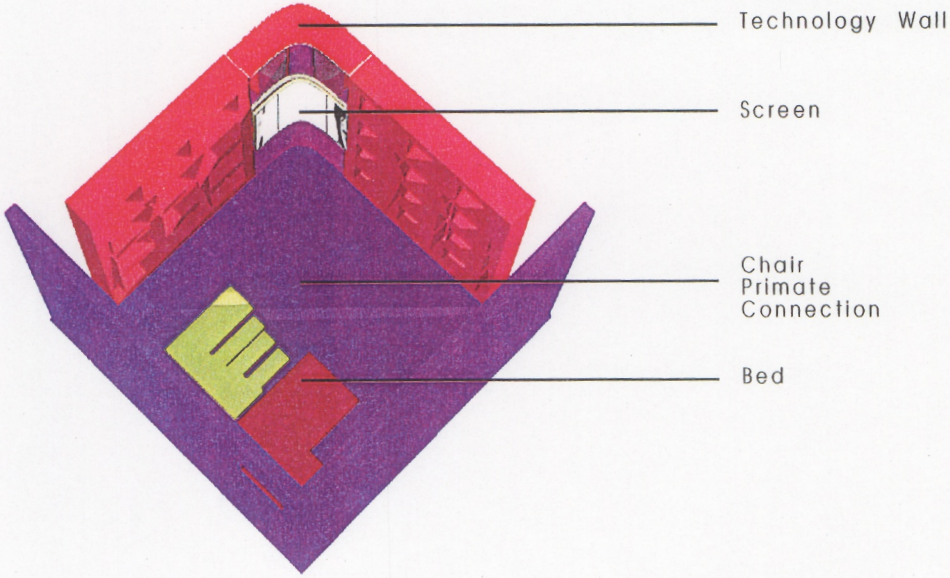
www.wired.com/4.04/turkle

Node 9

and wall

Fundamental to the conception of the node is the place that technology holds within it. Technology and the service it provides within our daily living are ever changing factors. Governed by a built-in obsolescence as well as the reality of impermanence, technology has become the bane of our existence. The nodes respond to this condition by providing a technology wall where the functions of life are met by "appliances". These appliances do not make any allusion to permanence but are units that can be "plugged in" to the technology wall and can be moved around at will. The wall contains within it all the necessary infrastructure (including: utilities, communication, and environmental controls) necessary for the flexible and efficient use of any appliance.

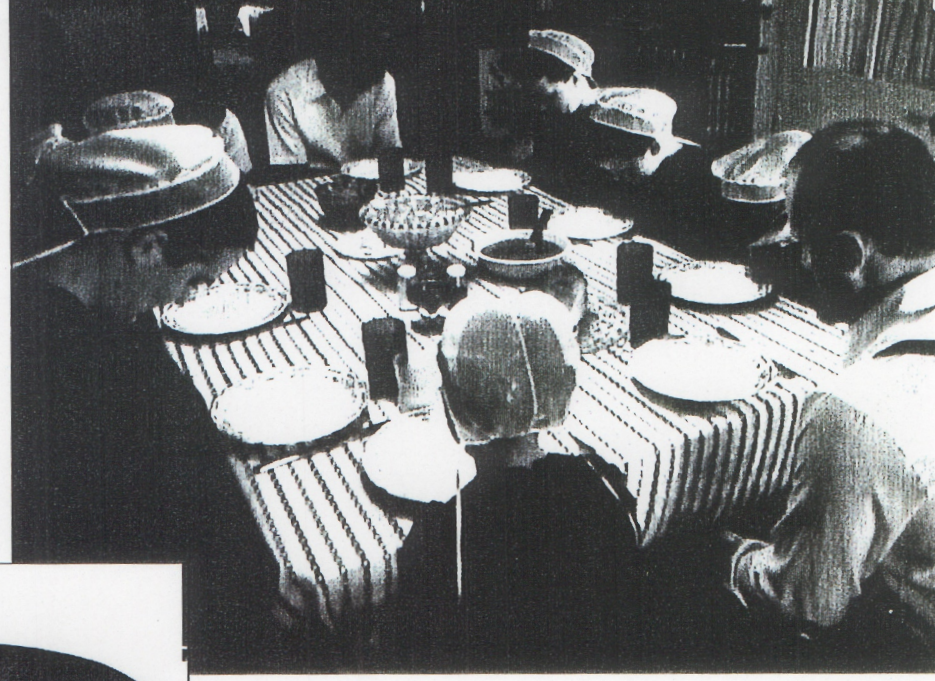




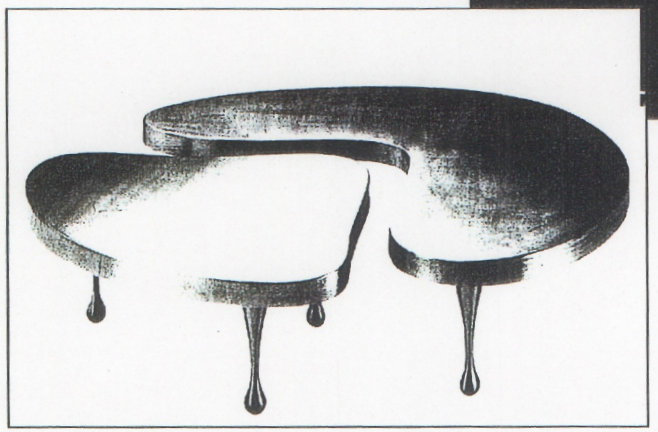
Contents of the Shelter

10 Node

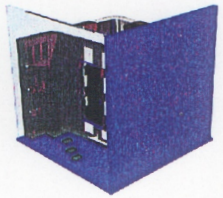
and community



In a social environment where people are separated from each other, much a result of computer technology, humans will seek out any means by which they can satisfy the instinctual urge for communication and companionship. The combination of the Bastion and the Nodes provide for both the denial and the relief of this instinctual condition.



By replacing the traditional constructs of a home with the Node and Bastion, the opportunity arises for greater efficiency and flexibility. People will have increased control over their individual living conditions. They will no longer constrained by the needs or desires of the other members of the household and can construct a place that is tailor ed to their particular needs and wants.



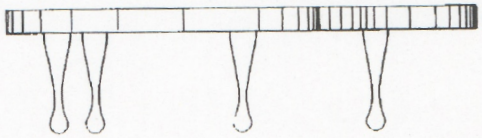


Table by Frederick Kiesler

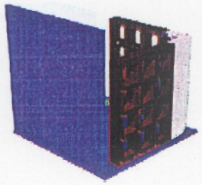
Node 11

and cube

With the separation of daily functions into autonomous units, many of the traditional spaces or rooms within a house can now be eliminated. One can work, sleep, rest, play, communicate, gossip, bathe, and relieve your daily needs all within the comfort of your own private space. The node (single habitational unit) provides for all functional needs...

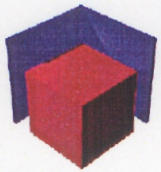
Except

... for those associated with the acts of food preparation and eating. These two activities bond people together and are essential for the survival of a family. By separating the act of food preparation/consumption from all other activites and thus providing a special place within the shelter, the ritual is elevated to a celebratory act and therefore all the more powerful and important.

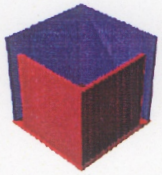


Cube

Enclosure to Define



Vessel to Hold



Metamorphosis

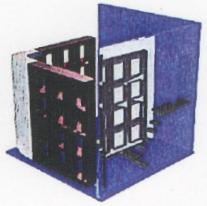
Today we have moved beyond the 'First Modern Age' into an Information Society, that faith in the power of technology to bring progress seems at best naive. We have become aware of the threats posed by the technology to both the environment and our jobs. As technology has become more of an end in itself, it has tended to make people passive, dependent as individuals on the apparatus of anonymous organizational lives. The primary role of technology in every day culture has become questionable, as people still yearn for traditional symbols of individual and collective values. Social progress has not kept pace with technological interaction between people.

Herbert Lachmayer- A Guide To ARCHIGRAM, 1961-74

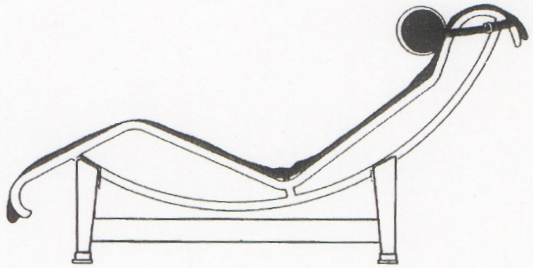
How the nodes developed

12 Beds and enclosure

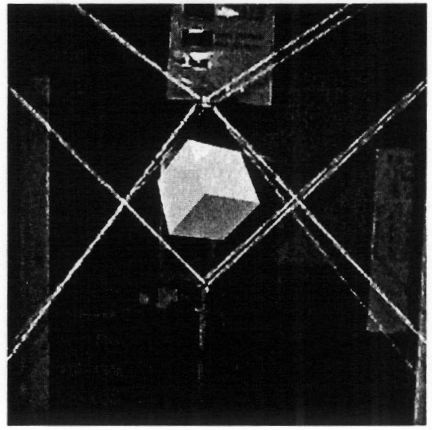
The act of sleeping is separated from all other activity in the rest of the Node, it provides a retreat from the network and from life so that a rejuvenation can occur. Within the confines of the sleeping zone, spaces are carved out for the storage and display of the personal artifacts of the dweller. It can be thought of as a cave or womb or simply as a place to hide.



"'These are a few of my favorite things': hangnail droppings and lime peels, nicotine smears, pubic hairs in the soap, boiled milk skin and toilet bowl rims, curries counter tops, humidifier algae, tomato pulp"
In media res- Assemblage 24



Chair by LeCorbusier



Which *CUBE*

is more important.

The cube

that is defined by

atoms

or the cube

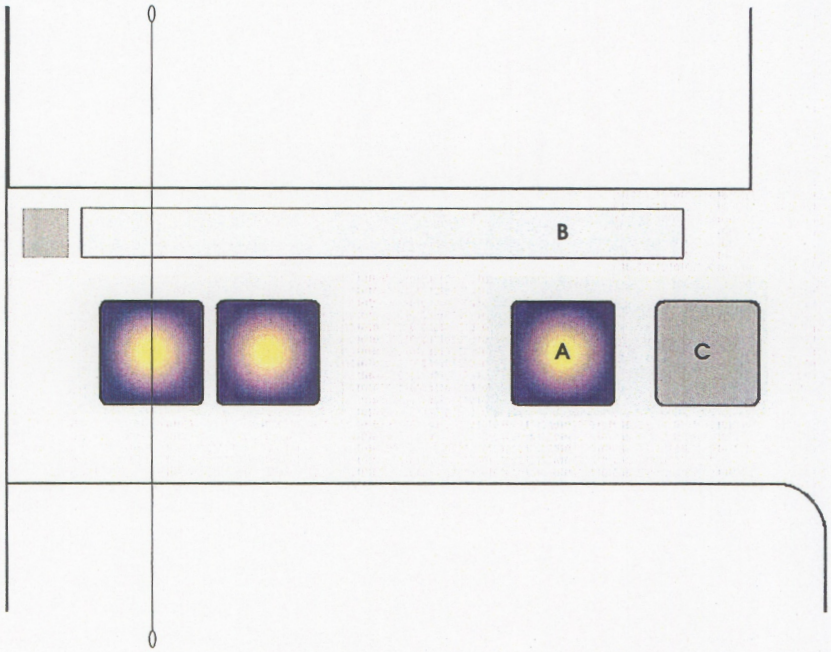
defined by

electrons.

Do not both demand recognition?

Family 1

Plate I



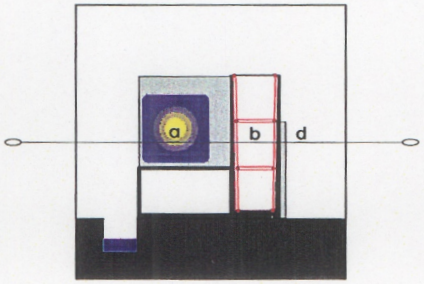
plan

Site:	Riva San Vitale, Switzerland
Project	House
Program	Three Nodes
	Family Dinning
	Roof Garden
	Boat Dock

A	Single Habitational Unit
B	Access Ramp
C	Bastion
D	Structure to raise above lake

... 2.5 Kids
Dog
White Picket Fence
Mini Van
PTA

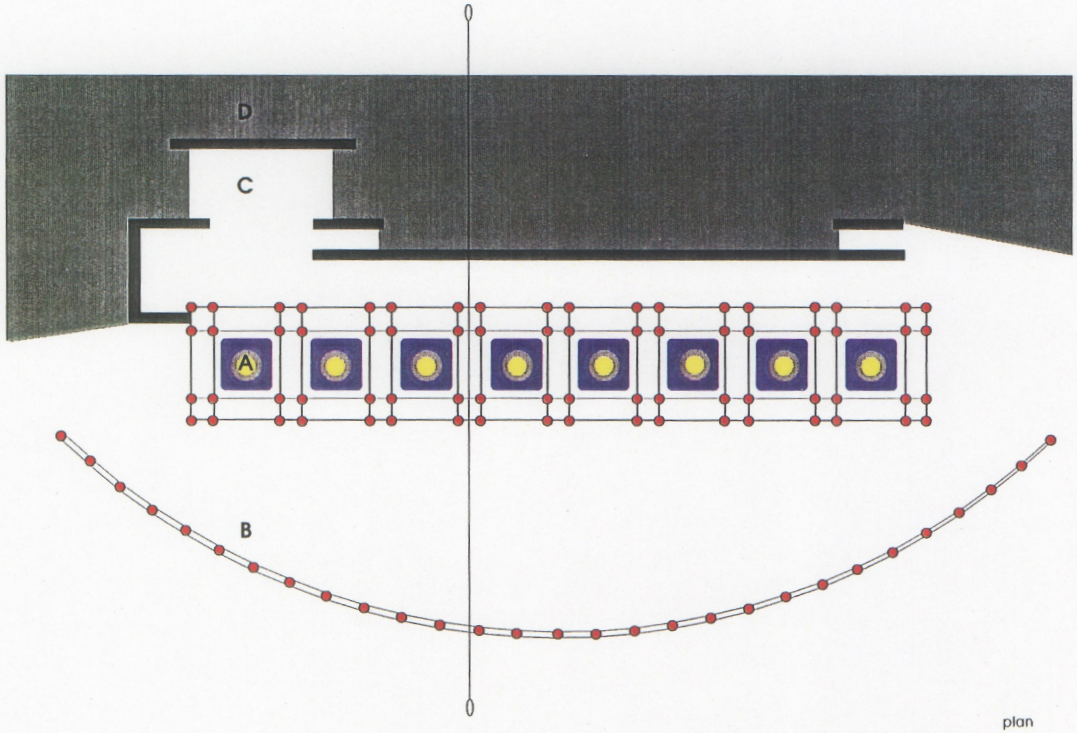
site



section

Communal 2

Plate II



plan

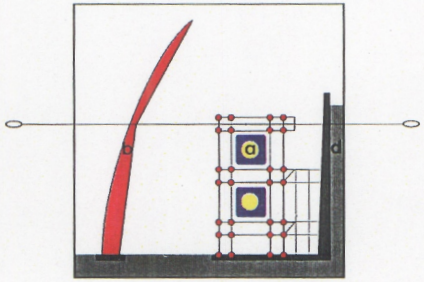
Site:	Desert in Utah, USA
Project	Desert Retreat
Program	Sixteen Nodes
	Community Dining
	Community Garden
	Community Meeting

A	Single Habitational Unit
B	Screen/Solar Collectors
C	Communal Tower
D	Retaining Wall Cut into Rock Face

Now I saw when the lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see."

Holy Bible: New Kings James Version, Revelations 6:1

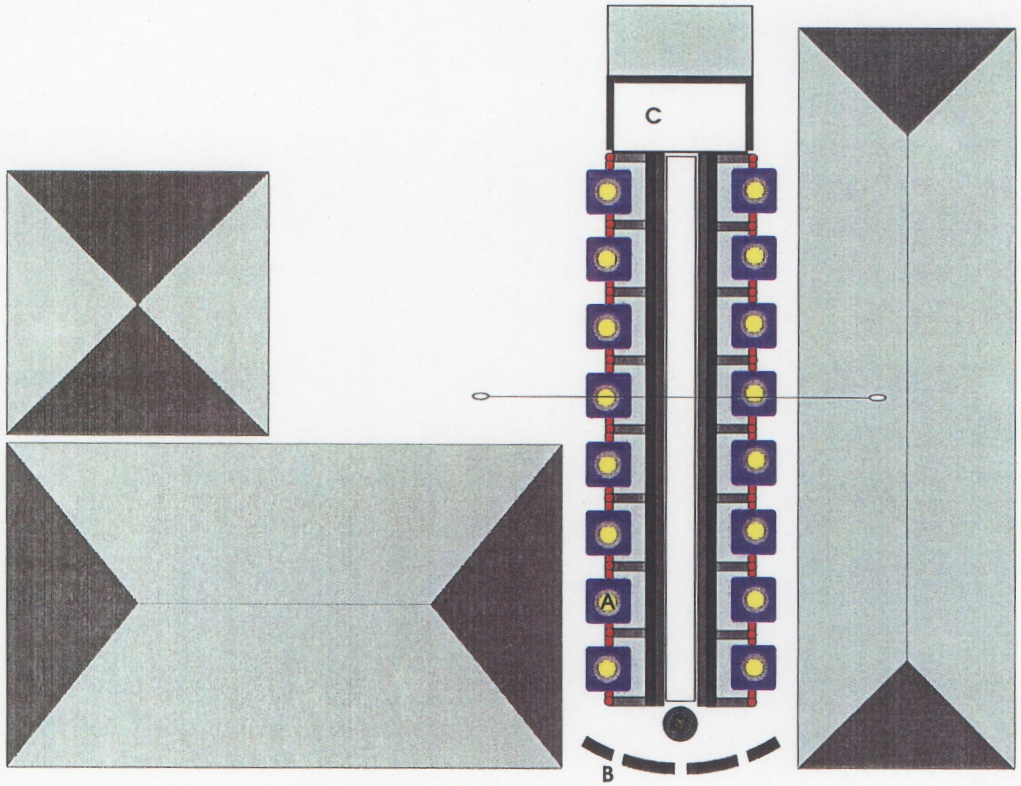
site



section

3 Mixed Use

Plate III



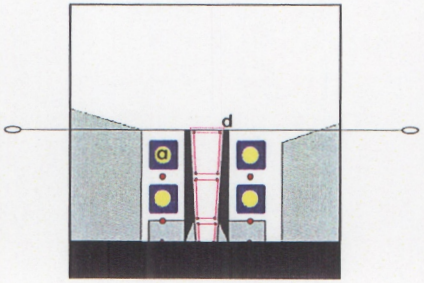
site

Site:	Alexandria Va., USA
Project	Family Dwelling and Store
Program	Five Nodes
	Family Dining
	Family Meeting
	Store

A	Single Habitational Unit
B	Urban Facade
C	Communal Tower
D	Load Bearing Walls

Thank you for shopping at our store. We are sorry to report that the publisher has notified us that the book you ordered is currently out of stock. We suggest that you reorder in several months or try Eureka book search at 1-800-563-2222
Title:Medium is the Message
Price: $10.00
Order#: 19987-1

site



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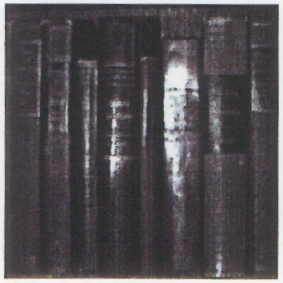
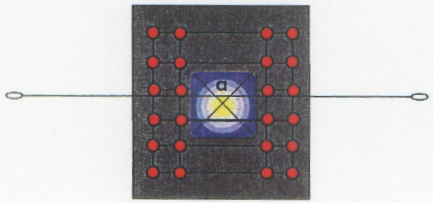
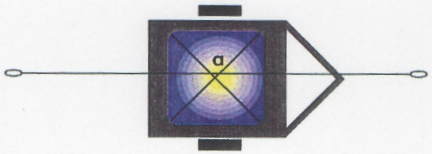


Additional 4

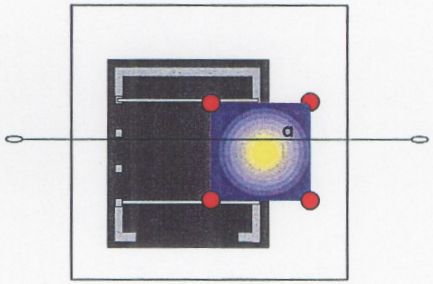
Plate IV



plan



plan



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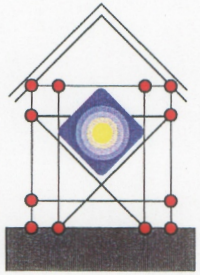
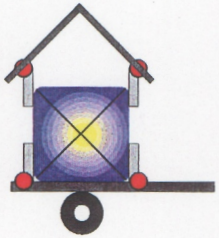


section



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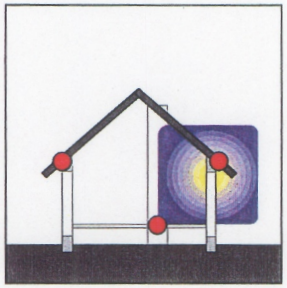


section

Site 1:	Forest
Project	Isolation Cabin
Program	Node
	Open Frame Roof
Site 2:	The Open Road
Project	Portable Node
Program	Node
	Trailer
	Collapsible Roof
Site 3:	Detached Garage
Project	Node for extended family
Program	Node
	Renovation of old garage

A Single Habitational Unit

Mist
Low-anchored cloud,
Newfoundland air,
Fountain-head and source of rivers
Dew-cloth, dream drapery,
And napkin spread by frays;
Drifting meadow of the air,
Where bloom the daisied banks
and Violets,
And in whose fenny Labyrinth
The bittern booms and heron wades;
Sprint of lakes and seas and rivers,
Bear only perfumes and the scent
Of healing herbs to just men's fields!
-Henry David Thoreau

1. node in the woods

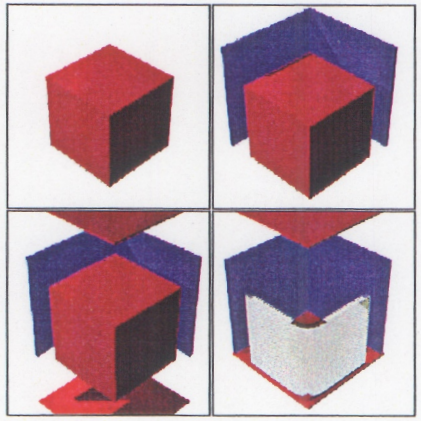
Come to *Crazy Larry's* and drive away, TODAY! with your own personal portable node at rock bottom prices.
Not 10% off
Not 20% off
Not Even 40% off
But 50% off
only TODAY at *Crazy Larry's*.

2. portable node

Bill of Sale

Customer: William Gates
Model #: 6897/GS
Model #: Geriatrics
ID #: 6007 425 9859 426
Cost: $42,699.99
User: Doreen Gates
(Grandmother)
Date: 4/28/06

3. node renovation



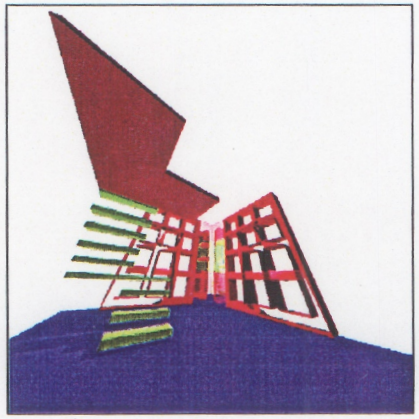
"The future

is built

on the ruins

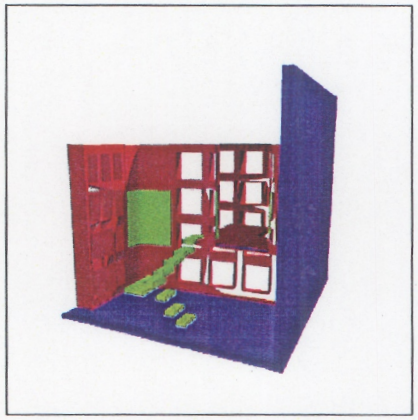
of the Present"

Irata Isosaki: 1964



Friday
This morning, just after 11:00, Michael locked himself in his office and he won't come out.
Bill (Bill!) sent Michael this totally wicked flame-mail from hell on the e-mail system - and he just walled on a chunk of code Michael had written. Using the Bloom County-cartoons-taped-on-the-door index,
Michael is certainly the most sensitive coder in Building Seven - not the type to take criticism easily. Exactly why Bill would choose Michael of all people to wall on is confusing. We figured it must have been a random quality check to keep the troops in line. Bill's so smart.
Bill is wise.
Bill is kind.
Bill is benevolent.
Bill, Be My Friend...Please!

Douglas Coupland, Microserfs, WIRED 2.01



The joint is called #hot-tub and it's open all most all the time. I've been soaking in it for two hours with "Bubbles", "Hard Charger" and "Lush Lady:" Charger and Lady are, shall we say, flirting heavily, while Bubbles is trying to get my attention. But s/he's a notorious transvestite, so I'm keeping my distance. People float in and out of this hot tub, which is open to all comers, but no one gets wet- just a little damp sometimes. If you fancy someone, and he or she fancies you, it is possible to go private and exchange sexual fantasies until you're too exhausted, or bored, to continue.

Gerald Van Der Leun, Twilight Zone of the Id- Today's on-line Sex is as wild and far ranging as the human imagination, Time Magazine Spring 1995

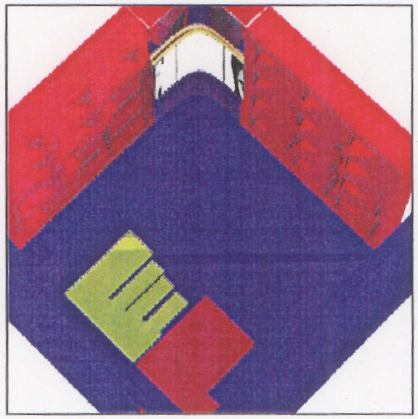
On Christmas Eve 1990, Walter Hudson died. At the time of his death he weighed 1,125 pounds, slightly down from the 1,200-1,400 pounds (he kept breaking scales, the exact figure is unknown) that established his Guinness certified record as the world's fattest man. Indeed, Hudson had grown so large, a section of the wall of his house had to be torn down and a forklift brought in to remove his body. His enormous coffin was towed behind a hearse to the cemetery where he was buried in a double plot.

Michael Sorkin, VR the world

It is a struggle not over territory or boundaries but over the very definitions of these terms. It's like a conflict between cartographers, who understand the ocean as a grid of longitude and latitude lines, and surfers who understand it as a dance of chaotic waves.

Douglas Rushkoff, Cyberia

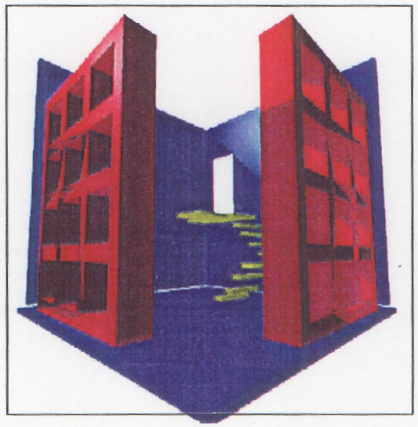
Top of Stair



The World is populated by consumers rather than citizens. Technology breeds unlimited customized choices. The consumer is served by highly evolved companies, aggressively nimble and conscientious of the market's whims.

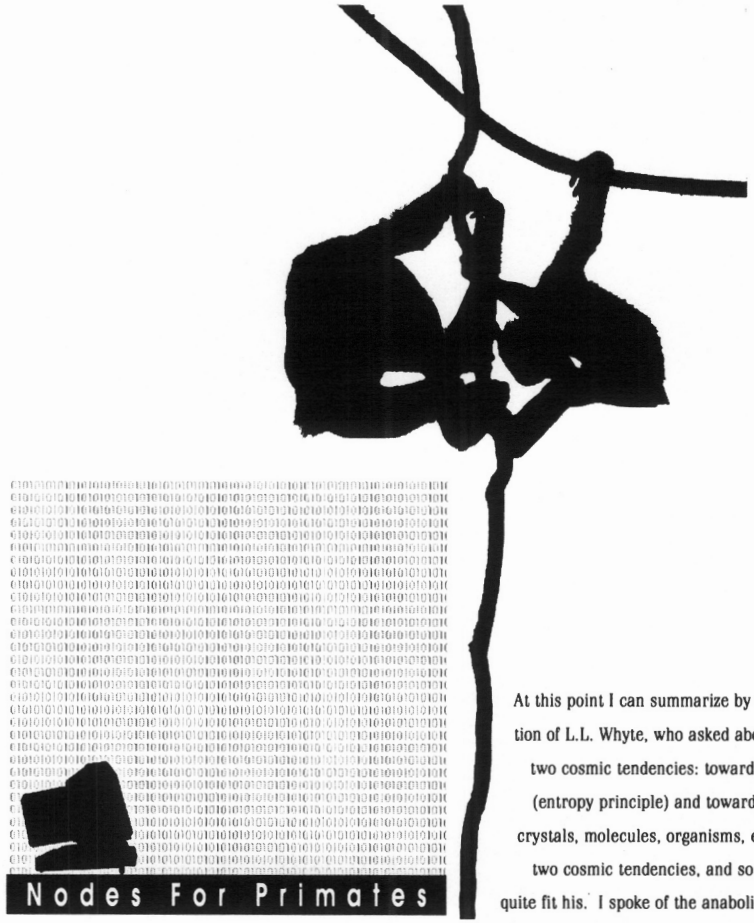
Global Business Network, Wired Scenarios Oct. 1995

From the sky



The suburbs weren't all bad. After all, the greenery was abundant and with it the opportunity for clean air and gardening and outdoor recreation; houses were large and susceptible to enlargement; open spaces buffered neighborhood from neighborhood; serpentine streets eschewed the grid. And they had their own dream of happiness. The nightmare charms us more today, the alienating democracy of absolute conformity, the uniform texture of the single use, the enforced privileging of the family and of a jealous notion of the private, the endless oblivious sprawl.

Joan Copjec and Michael Sorkin, Shrooms: East New York Assemblage 24



Nodes For Primates

At this point I can summarize by returning to the question of L.L. Whyte, who asked about the relation of 'the two cosmic tendencies: towards mechanical disorder (entropy principle) and towards geometric order (in crystals, molecules, organisms, etc.).' Whyte refers to two cosmic tendencies, and so did I; but mine do not quite fit his. I spoke of the anabolic tendency, which initiates all articulate existence by creating patterns of forces. This tendency, however, does not create 'geometrical order' by itself. Organized form requires the interplay of the structural theme, brought about by the anabolic tendency, with a second cosmic tendency, which strives toward tension reduction and thereby attains the simplicity of orderliness. The entropy principle, on the other hand, cannot be described adequately as a tendency 'towards mechanical disorder,' because catabolic destruction is only one way of moving from a less probable to a more probable distribution of matter. Nor is destruction by friction, erosion, or cooking the sort of orderly process we tend to have in the mind when we speak of cosmic tendency. What does supply the entropy principle with an aspect of cosmic order is Kohler's Law of Dynamic Direction, which reduces tension not by dissipating or degrading energy but by organizing it according to the simplest, most balanced structure available to a system.

Excerpt from: Entropy and Art by Rudolph Arnhiem

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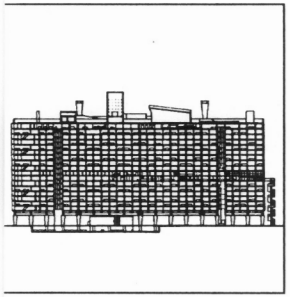
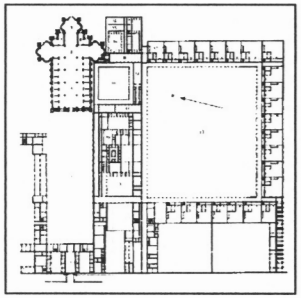


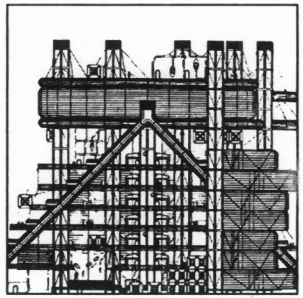
Unite d'habitation
Le Corbusier
Briey-en-Foret, France

The original furnishings were simple: rubber flooring, plywood interior partitions, one freestanding storage unit serving as a room divider, electric wall outlets but no lighting features, and a swivel tap to fill the kitchen sink on one side and an awkwardly small tub on the other. The only planned communal facility was a nursery on the roof and a tobacco stand in the lobby.
Deborah Gans, Princeton Architectural Press



La Certosa di Pavia
Cistercian Monks
Pavia Italy

Within the bounds of a week, each monk is forbidden to leave the confines of his "cell". Since he spends so much of his time within this place, the "cells" become more like small villas or house. Complete with a garden, study, small library, and sleeping room, the "cell" provides for all the needs of a monk.
Mark Ramirez



Archigram
Plug in University Node
Unbuilt Project

The main enclosures are simple tensioned skin slung on trays which collectively create the 'node'. Each student can have a standard metal box and can chose to have it located anywhere on the decking.
Peter Cook 1965

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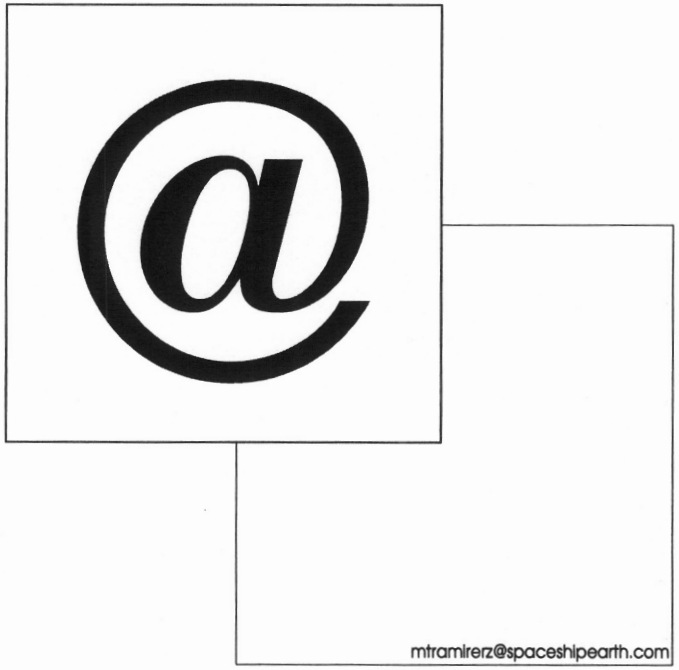
Closing Thoughts

"Maybe the people aren't ripe for it yet-"

Cartoon from Alan Dunn 1947

As we continue to push the limits of technology and move into the 21st century, humans find themselves at another threshold moment in time. We are poised to begin a new cycle in human evolution and have a historic opportunity to guide its development, temper any harmful effects, and set limits. Nodes for primates provides a solution to the problems the world faces today by establishing an alternate way of viewing our living environment. By questioning how we organize our home, Nodes for Primates proposes a shelter current with today's cultural ,economic, and social climate.


mtramirerz@spaceshipearth.com