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RICE UNIVERSITY

HILLTOP HOUSING:
RECONFIGURING THE SUBURBAN CONDITION

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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ABSTRACT

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Blandness and paranoia in the architecture of the domestic realm has, to a great degree, been influenced by the current mode of information -- the act of viewing this information, its pacing, and its rhythm. Reality is perceived in the information realm, while the experiential, physical "world of things" is unreal. We live in a commodified environment of projections from passively received information.

The project is situated in the suburban condition of Daly City, California, and it is this model of society which is economic and information based that demands consideration. The articulation of the spaces in the Daly City dwelling project attempt to project an image of suburban patterns which have been reconfigured by forces of topography, perception and the physical body, information, and the automobile. What was once responsive to a narrow range of forces has become intertwined and "flowing" with a kind of momentum in the architectural elements which make the dwelling experience.
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Introduction

Blandness and paranoia in the architecture of the domestic realm has, to a great degree, been influenced by the current mode of information -- the act of viewing this information, its pacing, and its rhythm. This influence of information on social ideal has been present since the invention of the printing press. When words became public, propaganda was made possible; large groups of people could be exposed to a single source of thought, thus the phenomenon of "social ideal" was born. Even so, real space remained the dominant, or perhaps, the only (from first hand experience) reality, and information affected this reality. Only recently has information acquired its own space, formed its own reality, taken on a life of its own -- divorced from the physical, experiential world of "real space".

In Steven Holl's Rural & Urban House Types In North America, dwelling types are cited which present the motivating needs driving the formal developments of these dwellings. The Dog Trot House was formed through climatic considerations and also to provide for human and non-human domesticated animal habitation. The Highway House was economically motivated to provide
for a mixed-use dwelling. The Plantation House was formed both as an indicator of social status and in response to the climate. The Father-Son-Holy Ghost dwelling type was a response to accommodate the tight urban grid and allow for minimal frontage for property tax reasons. These dwelling forms first responded to the need for human shelter, then were molded by the many forces that shape this world -- economics, politics, society, humanity, the environment, spirituality. With more recent models, such as the Mobile Home or the Geodesic Dome, forces which shaped these types include social ideal: promotion of nomadic lifestyle, affordability, prefabricated/machinic aesthetic, and environmentally-conscious propaganda. Both these types are indicative of forms further integrated or interconnected with these “external” forces, but also maintaining and projecting a deliberate awareness of their morphous make-up(code). Both seem to be extreme types of dwellings due to their distinctly jarring forms, yet, they are exemplary of a visual, formal legibility of their times.

The Gated Community is a current dwelling type which deserves investigation for many reasons, a few of which are its popularity as a housing option, its quick saturation into the housing market, its unquestioned blandness of form, and its
rather insidious prescription for lifestyle and social noninteraction. It is an exaggerated case of architectural, tangible, physical elements reduced to the secondary role of optical by-products of the information realm. The security gate, for example, is typically comprised of an eight to ten foot high electric gate running between traditional gateway structures, which, as formal elements, have been appropriated as icons for high income or upper middle income real estate; the general message is exclusion or elitism. The gate is a visual cue primarily and, secondarily, a physical deterrent. It functions much the same way as a sign on the window of a building stating that the property is protected by a security system. The deterrent is a visual message which claims that these property owners mean to counter-attack any invasion of privacy and warns against the possibility of police action in the case of forced entry.

In Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, they distinguish between close-range vision as part of tactile or haptic space and long-distance vision which relates to optical space. Haptic space involves shifting events where "orientations, landmarks, and linkages are in continuous variation; it operates step by step. Examples are the desert, steppe, ice, and sea, local spaces of
pure connection...Where there is close vision, space is not visual, or rather the eye itself has a haptic, nonoptical function..." Optic space is a striated condition of stable orientation and central perspective.¹ Here, one recognizes the rigid structuring of reality as if it was a timeless diagram. The front gate of the Gated Community occupies optical space in that it visually symbolizes and reinforces economic and social barriers, thus reducing the possibility of unforeseen occurrences. Consumers of similar economic and cultural lifestyles buy into a "safe" and constant reality of fairly homogeneous clan members. The notion of neighborhood, public, and society is one completely embedded in consumer options.

Once again, the issue of information space and real space is brought up in the distinction between the haptic and the optic. The desire for "absolute" security, for most inhabitants, is due to a projection of inner city crime in information. The fear is real, but it is not grounded in actual experience. Also, the choice is generally affected by a number of "well-meaning" recommendations on the "best place to live" based on statistics dealing with crime rate, local economy,  

¹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota
quality of education, and/or amount of pollutants in the environment. The fact that this decision has been based predominantly on virtual reality and not on real experience is indicative of a shift in forces of influence.

If, for instance, one were to accept that society is based on exchange, and that the essence of exchange was an interactive balance, like the ecosystem or Nature's food chain, then a shift in forces would waver the balance of exchange and endanger the shape of society. The market economy is a complex realization of virtual and physical operations, where the market is the virtual mediator or mind of the physical bodies of production and consumption. The two interdependent realities in this system rely on each other's active participation. The world of human construct cannot afford to have one reality feed the entire system: information and optic space reflects and inspires the physical and haptic, which in turn generates more information.

Human society and physical reality rely on a finite structure; these boundaries keep this world from being the reflection in this cyclical system, which, if it were

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to occur, would result in virtual infinities and physical insanities. Social
dysfunction leads to the ultimate annihilation of the human system. As a point of
survival, the simple and obvious recognition of the physical, experiential
condition is required.³

² Haptic space and optic space are made analogous to a person and this person’s mirror image; these
are two intertwined synchronous realities with subtle but distinct hierarchical roles. The person’s
physical appearance is the information for this reflection, and the reflection influences his/her
physical and mental presence. If the mirror image was somehow infused with more significance and
vitality than the actual physical person schizophrenia would result.
³Felix Guattari writes, “Subjectivity today remains under the massive control of apparatuses of power
and knowledge, thus consigning technical, scientific and artistic innovations to the service of the most
reactionary and retrograde figures of sociality. In spite of that, other modalities of subjective
production -- processual and singularizing ones -- are conceivable. These alternate foms of existential
reappropriation and self-valorization may in the future become the reason for living for human
collectivities and individuals who refuse to give in to the deathlike entropy characterizing the period
we are passing through.” (‘Regimes, Pathways, Subjects’, Incorporations (New York: Urzone, 1992).
The Condition: Daly City, California

Daly City is a bedroom community, very internalized, yet physically linked with the city of San Francisco and named the Gateway to the San Mateo County Peninsula. Its cultural diversity is a resultant of an initial settlement by predominantly Irish and Italian immigrants with a later influx of large groups of Mexican, Filipino, and, recently, Middle Eastern peoples. These ethnic groups, for the most part, have each formed their own community soft enclaves within Daly City, with their specific ethnic markets, restaurants, bars, churches, and recreation centers. The population is generally undereducated. Typical programmatic indicators of an academic/intellectual or information/communication-motivated “community”, such as computing centers, copy centers, and cafes, are lacking in this suburban setting. In other words, its
physicality is evidence of stasis or perhaps a lag time in which it is non-
interactive with surrounding forces of social and technological progress. This is
a typical American phenomenon.

What is communication in a bedroom community? What are the forms of
information-gathering in this environmental condition? Here, it takes the form of
spectator viewing and the history of spectator viewing, entertainment as cultural
education, consumer action/interaction, and the events/modes of transportation.
These provide moments for communication to act as a vehicle towards social
cohesion or identity.

Daly City, like much of suburban America, is patterned as a gridded sprawl,
sometimes shifted by a shadow of a residual farming development or
interrupted by a freeway system, but relentlessly homogeneous in density
distribution. Opportunities for public identity do not take the traditional forms of a village square, a city center, or a “Main Street”. The traditional single place does not exist; instead, the opportunities are multiple and shifting, located sporadically.

The Site: A Hilltop In Daly City

The city’s topography is a rolling moment of hills and valleys which gently slope down towards the San Francisco Bay and towards the Pacific Ocean. Most of the Gated Communities in Daly City are located in areas somewhat removed from the general residential sprawl, on hilltops in order to take advantage of the commodity known as “view” and promote the image of a safe, idyllic community. Formally, the dwellings open into the enclave, turning their backs on the rest of residential Daly City, so that the “community” is relegated to the role of an anonymous framed suburban landscape.

The decision to occupy a typical site of such a dwelling type was made in order to explore other formal avenues in a housing development given the same environmental parameters.
Three modular patterns from computer communication records.

suburban patterns

suburban shapes
The Suburban Condition

Suburbia has been popularized as a surreal state of banality when compared with a cosmopolitan density—"the fast lane". Images of repetitious rows of tract homes along unremarkable streets, recognizable only because of the name or number posted on the sign on the corner, actually present a ruthless physical model of the state of the "public" or the collective society. Citizens are anonymous numbers, not human beings, and only at a consumer level are people attributed with differences and desires, which help to conveniently place them in the proper consumer categories. This is part of the reality of the suburban condition if one views it with long-distance vision, seeing the striations. With close-range vision, one can see that a suburban environment is not a seamless sprawl of white noise; its landmarks are shifting and its shapes are subtle. For instance, the type of landscaping in front of a dwelling reveals one kind of identity or pattern, the display of Christmas ornaments is another striking example of formal expression creating unexpected linkages throughout the landscape, and the color scheme of a house yet another example.⁴

⁴ I grew up in Daly City and observed its changing patterns from day to day. With the front yard landscaping, one could see which households had common interests in this respect, which ones actually exchanged plant cuttings, and which households, even during six years of drought, severely economized on water usage in order to maintain their gardens. Through this physical evidence, one could see which households talked with each other, which ones noticed each other, which ones had the same aesthetic sensibilities, which ones didn’t. The display of Christmas decorations was a more striking pattern because it was lit up (most people are impressed with this sweet and magical twinkle of colored lights), could be seen from a distance, and involved a greater and more pointed capacity for memory. Each year, certain households would put up holiday decorations; this is one of the few communal gestures that one makes in suburbia. Two houses in one area spelled out “Merry Christmas” in lights on the front of their houses. The next year, two other houses spelled it out in their native languages, Spanish and Hawaiian. One enthusiastic household has, over four years, inspired the surrounding neighbors to “join in the fun”. Now, that street is a brilliant beacon in Daly City. In
The suburban condition is one that is clearly more passive, more anonymous, and far less haptic than its urban counterpart, but it is a viable form of existence. As with any form of human collective, it has problems to be addressed. Its subtle seams can be explored—its elusive shapes strengthened.

fact, it has inspired a recent tradition of driving or walking through the densely decorated pockets of the city. The painted color schemes of each dwelling are yet another example, which is fairly self-explanatory.
Form And Topography
Since the beginning of architecture, built forms have, in one way or another, reacted to their topographical environment, through imitation, by taking advantage of certain topographical features to obtain a desirable end, or even by ignoring and/or destroying it. In the Daly City dwelling project, the origins for an initial footprint on the hillside were derived very simply from the physical reality of the hill-form and from the human perception of this land-form from a distance, against its surface undulations, and from the site gazing outward. By acknowledging that automobile access could not be denied for cultural and safety code reasons a meandering road was laid which responded to the terraces, curves and
slopes of the hillside. A concrete retaining wall was then placed for two reasons: to slip along the road as a continuous visual/physical datum and, by being faceted, to emphasize the transition moments in moving around the hill. It is a mapping of temporality set in concrete, flowing around its landscape. The direction of the line of the facet indicates the limit or frame of the view while traveling along that face of the facet. The points of the facet, the transition moments, provide visual intervals, marking the density of view shifts and the speed of the topography. Taking an average speed of twenty-five miles per hour that one would travel on this road, an approximate minimum cone of vision measured forty-five degrees graphically displays the rhythm of viewing the surrounding area. (figure 1) Through this gesture, the direct links

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5 The automobile has so completely saturated the lifestyle of the suburban condition that to deny this reality would not be an infiltration of an existing market product but a frontal attack on this product, which is a far less compelling and realistic a venture for me at this time. Also, fire engine and paramedic access is required.
between the body and the hill site, perception and motion, perception and the body, and perception and the social and physical environment begin to reference the significance of a natural form in a developed context and of an individual in society.

A further development of the established parameters led to the mapping of recommended open spaces at the areas of multiple views converging outward. The definite voids would be those of darkest blue (figure 2) where the built edges around these openings would frame the view both from the site and into the site. These would be collective moments of perception. The next two graphic studies involved the laying out of building densities based also on an abstract notion of speeds of forms (figure 3 and figure 4). The recommended open spaces, marked
with blue, layered with the built spaces, marked with grey, indicated a built collective space, a fast building, because of its adjacency to an articulated collective viewing event and due to its location at a moment of many intervals. An idea of frequency was established by taking the distance of each facet or framed view as a ratio with the speed of travel, an average of twenty-five miles per hour. This frequency of seconds per frame delineated the pacing of the spaces along that road and the resulting speeds of the built forms in those spaces. Slow built space would exist in the area of 8.2s/frame and fast built space would occur in the area of 1.6s/frame.

Later in the design process, the legibility of the relationship between built and natural form became an issue.

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6 Built space does have many aspects of speed: construction time, economic issues, formal/spatial
It became crucial to question the significance of any natural event within a relentless building development. These elements are a reminder of a larger perspective—the network of life in flux. The spaces and forms would meander around the hill, articulating its emergent shape without blanketing over it. The visual impact of this relationship would seem stable yet delicate; the forms would be in motion.

associations, visual impact, programmatic possibilities, physical movement.
7 Throbbing emergence and regression of life’s shapes. Each enables the others’ existence. Like dinosaur bones and landfill, a hill thrusts through the gridded suburban sprawl.
Form And Perception
"The heightened sensitivity of the picture plane may no longer permit sculptural illusion, or trompe-l'oeil, but it does and must permit optical illusion. The first mark made on a surface destroys its virtual flatness, and the configurations of a Mondrian still suggest a kind of illusion of a kind of third dimension. Only now it is a strictly pictorial, strictly optical third dimension...one into which one can look, can travel through, only with the eye."

--Clement Greenberg

Greenberg discusses the picture plane in reference to the canvas of a painting, but it is applicable to any flattening and framing of space, such as the television or computer screen. The sculptural illusion is the awareness of real, tangible space (it is three-dimensional and has visceral weight), and the optical illusion is that of optical space or passive-inducing space, which will be discussed later. Visual-oriented activity, which dominates current lifestyle, is indeed eye-active, not body-active, and so one is induced to be body-passive even in real space. Society has learned to trust or passively absorb the spectacle, the information--the optical illusion, through a long history of the optical being more legible than reality.

Richard Sennett discusses historical costuming in the theater as one source of the resultant language or code based nature of visuality.

"But in the 1830's, and for the next several decades, historicism acquired a force it had not previously had. The public demanded accuracy in

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order to create the 'necessary illusion' of the theater... Critics like Carlos Fischer consider the passion for veracity in costume to have been inimical to freedom and imagination in staging a play. What these people tried to find in the theater was a world where you could indeed be absolutely sure that the people you saw were genuine. The actors really represented what they played. There was no possible deception, no act of deduction which might go wrong. In the theater, unlike the street, life was unshielded; it appeared as it was... When Moyr Smith spoke of the search for the 'illusion necessary' that all these historical forays entailed, what he meant was that for a play to be believable it had to establish a truth of time and place—a truth the players and the audience could not establish in their own lives... Aristotle tells us that the theater involves a 'willing suspension of disbelief.' The stage costume of the mid-19th Century capitals transcended this dictum. In the city, society must depend on art to end mystification, to tell a truth which men and women can otherwise arrive at only by an often faulty process of deduction from miniaturized clues. That is to say, the relation between the audience and this art form began to be one of dependence. The theater was doing for them that which in the modern capital they could not do easily for themselves. The divisions between mystery, illusion, and deception on the one hand and truth on the other were in the mid-19th Century drawn into a peculiar form; authentic life, which requires no effort of decoding, appeared only under the aegis of stage art.9

The optical mode can be thwarted as well as encouraged through the same techniques or through a simple deconstruction of these manipulations. The juxtaposition of architectural spaces can function as a vehicle towards the breakdown of the eye-active/body-passive/mind-passive syndrome. Le Corbusier felt that the landscape was to be limited and framed, like a painting, in order to remain a visually conscious experience. This would also collapse the view into a two-dimensional image by removing the foreground. Space of this frame would lose its temporality; it would be captured in a moment. The frame of an opening would direct the eye towards that view and also obstruct the rest of the landscape, thus rendering it an object, not a field or background. The landscape would then have its own subjectivity, projecting its own active

9 Richard Sennett, The Fall Of Public Man (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1974), pp. 175-
discourse. "Visually and spatially the oppressive narrowness of the Unite d'habitation's apartments 'live' from the distant view that opens up from the inside."^{10}

In the Daly City dwelling project, spaces of frames and non-frames, containment and emergence, visual obstacles within frames, and the incorporation of the environment into and onto the building space itself are some of the vehicles which attempt to engage the body and mind as well as the eye in the whole experience of daily life and dwelling. In moving through a collective or fast space, the building elements undulate in and out, forcing the image of Daly City into one of framed subject and into one of field surrounding the subject of the viewer. (figures 5, 6, 7)^{11}

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^{11} I believe that people who frequently use public transportation have a better gut awareness about society. They have a physical and visual subconscious conditioning, which overrides even a mental inducement of fellow patrons into non-people.
reciprocal nature of visual communication in spaces of inhabitation -- visual access
figure 5
one moves along the band of medium speed, or pedestrian path: building to the left and open view of Daly City to the right; the eye moves into and through the circular space of frame, ricocheting off the building elements between the subject and the framed view; the body slides along the curved walls, is captured by the ocular void, enveloped by the built form, its belly looming ahead, dropping dense shade within a space tense with gravity; the subject's mind has crossed a threshold between the realm of the city and of the dwelling.
figure 6
within the frame space
the body has moved through the frames--horizontal, vertical, volumetric--and twists around to allow the eye a glance back visually reversing the physical progression; the suburb is framed and focused, poking inward.
Perception And Pacing
One could argue that living in an urban density is a more eventful experience because of the rich conglomeration of varying programs: residential spaces over small-scale retail shops next to large office towers beside a warehouse district spotted with cafes and bistros, all overlaid with a network of public transportation lines. The manipulation of programs is likely the most effective way of laying the infrastructure for enabling haptic space, yet, from an architectural standpoint, it is a compelling challenge to approach the problem as a formal exercise.

Places of different functions and programs offer spaces of varying speeds or pacings. For example, the activity and atmosphere in a bookstore is generally slower than that of a train station. The pace of a space and form is dependent upon the relationship between visual activity and physical activity, and, ultimately, how this relationship inspires an intuitive sense of this ambient rhythm. The speed of a moment is not a constant, and the pacing of a space is relative to all others depending on the particular connections, adjacencies, and thresholds within the shape of an event. The form of a place, within the limits of architectural building elements, could have a pace. If program or function were
to be abstracted into a notion of speed, and that speed was to be the formal goal of a space, then the form itself could establish the pace and rhythm of a space. Architecture would then be the armature for the flow of a place, and programs would be inserted into that flow whether to reinforce it or work against it.

river analogy: The flow of the river moves with the changing shape of the land. Moments of eddies, self-contained systems swirling around a center, force the current to move faster around it. Different forces coming together create turbulence.
New object/subject/space relationships are manifest as cultures become more language-based or code-oriented instead of symbolic. Shifts in inscriptions and roles reorganize the forces and polar points of reality. Traditional public space is lost in the post-electric city. According to Michael Sorkin, "To exist in the public realm in the electronic system means to be wired in. The ultimate consequence is that the body, the person, no longer simply exists in public space but actually becomes it." (These strange agents of the "public" subjects are the water in the river, affecting and being affected by the shape of the river bed, its course, and its obstacles.) Rosalind Williams discusses another shift in the encoding of form:

"The 1900 exposition incarnates this new and decisive conjunction between imaginative desires and material ones, between dreams and commerce, between events of collective consciousness and of economic fact. It is obvious how economic goods satisfy physical needs such as those for food and shelter; less evident, but of overwhelming significance in understanding modern society, is how merchandise can fill needs of the imagination. The expression 'the dream world of the consumer' refers to this non-material dimension. From earliest history we find indications that the human mind has transcended concerns of physical survival to imagine a finer, richer, more satisfying life. Instead, art and religion provided ways to express these desires. But in the late nineteenth century, commodities that provided an approximation of these age-old longings began to be widely available. Consumer goods, rather than other facets of culture, became focal points for desire."  

12 Rosalind Williams, "Dream World of Mass Consumption", in Rethinking Popular Culture, ed. by Chandra Mukerji ( ), p. 203
The built environment in the American culture has lost the conscious significance that art seems to have maintained even after having been commodified. It may be the scale of building which somehow requires that it be a neutral or alternative venture rather than a "focal point of desire". American economic-based culture has little recognition for those creatures, objects, and systems which cannot actively and fluidly enter the capitalist market. This project attempts to re-empower architecture at a level in which building has been commodified, in which it has entered the market economy—in middle-income housing.

How one perceives reality has much to with the modes of information. Television, the dominant form of information absorption in a bedroom community, actually operates at a speed faster than the human mind. According to Jerry Mander, an image never actually exists on the television screen. It is a scroll of light dots which operates like a scanning system, moving from upper right corner of the screen to the left--line by line. This continuous stream of light is received by the retina and recorded by the brain cells continuously; the only part of the experience that is not continuous is the translation of these dots of light into mental images. That process occurs
approximately ten times per second, while television is projecting virtual images at thirty times per second. Subliminal advertising takes advantage of the difference in rates to send messages to the brain, bypassing the conscious mind. The nature and speed of the light emitting from the television is also, according to some, hypnotic—inducing a passive state, “dimming the mind. ¹³ The act of watching itself is generally done in a passive posture, leaning back in a soft chair or couch absorbing the information in light dots, whatever the news or image may be, the body remains inactive. The television event is non-interactive. ¹⁴

The automobile is another vehicle which alters perception by framing and reflecting the environment through its armature and its mirrors, by providing a barrier between the subject and surroundings, and by moving the subject through the landscape at varying speeds. The automobile has had enormous effects on the shaping of humans, the shaping of the environment, and the interaction between the two. By this physical separation, the automobile has

¹⁴ Mark Poster writes, “In the TV ad a new language situation is structured by the manipulation of context, the reduction of conversation to monologue, and the self-referentiality of the message.”, in The Mode Of Information (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p. 69.
removed the human body's inscription in the landscape, but also provided the ability to view the world more expansively.

Many new modes of perceiving space have subverted the traditional, perhaps more natural, mode of viewing through the structure of the human body. This referencing of the human being as a part of physical reality used to be a part of daily activities in work, play, and getting from one place to another. Today, people must schedule physical activity into their busy lives of otherwise physical inertia, and this exercise takes place, in many cases, in a gym—a hermetic space of nautilus equipment and mirrors, a placeless space. The body's role, a kind of physical consciousness, in the perception of daily life has been drastically reduced.

Exploring the speed of architectural space and attempting to re-engage human consciousness with a physical reality involves creating space which works with the disynchronous speeds of eye and body.

Dwelling spaces (in the Daly City project) within the relative medium speed frequency areas are organized for the body to move parallel with the shifting
parallel walls, coplanar movement, and the eye to move faster than the body, seeing through the parallel glass walls, perpendicular to the parallel spatial configuration but also moving across these lane spaces simultaneously. (as shown in figure 8) In the dwelling spaces exploring a greater differential between eye and body movement, spatial organization is based primarily on a centrally located circular density of light from a skylight, which bridges visually between the split levels within the space, and a ramp, which offers spatial separation and connection. When standing at the rail of the upper level, within the ocular skylight, one looks through the haze of concentrated ambient light to view the space below, the balcony outside, and the city beyond. (figure9)
mapping a task which ritualizes transitions between "public" and "private"
spaces, with moments of different pacing
figure 8

coplanar space
figure 9

space of centering
compression and decompression of space and views: the pressure of enclosure and the expansion of opening establishes the rhythmic transition intervals; expanded duration; within each moment is another set of rhythms with its own local temporality and spatiality.
strands of movement weave and wrap around each other
a reconfiguration of a simple pattern
progression
Form And Communication
Social responsibility has much to do with the legibility of form: how the spaces are perceived, in what way do forms affect the subjectivity of a person, the politics of form, the morphology of movement. The articulation of the spaces in the Daly City dwelling project attempt to project an image of suburban strands which have been reconfigured by forces of topography, perception, information, and the automobile. What was once straight and unresponsive, or responsive to a narrow range of forces, has become intertwined and “flowing” with a kind of momentum in the architectural or spatial elements of walls, ground surfaces, railings, and skylights. The role of the individual in society is inscribed in the architecture as interactive, not internalized and isolated as it is in the typical suburban architecture. The walls of the dwellings, for example, may span two or more units, thus bringing to question the notion of ownership and linkages in a society; there is a physical slippage of singularity or isolation.

Materiality plays an important role in the articulation of formal, architectural communication. Just as with forms, materials are not inscribed with fixed symbolic identities, but they do tend to imply a range of associations. Concrete construction, for instance, appears more massive, weighty, and permanent, so it may be used to imply a slower pace or longer duration. Aluminum is lightweight, prefabricated, thin, and generally has a fast construction time. Many temporary structures have been constructed with this material; so it implies a fast pace and a nomadic lifestyle. In fact, the effects of natural light on
aluminum makes it appear to dissipate into the atmosphere. Wood, relative to the other two materials, is somewhere in between. The dwelling project is constructed of concrete, wood, metal, and glass; these materials emerge and regress within the spaces, perhaps one being more dominant than the others, depending on the intended temporal association of that moment.

Ultimately, built form is invested with the agents of current manifestations of the “public” realm (a virtual network of consumer patterns) but translated with reconfigurations due to forces of the physical condition, in an attempt to re-engage the notion of public with the physical world, thus shoring up the seams between what has become a socially dysfunctional seamlessness of public form in private space.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{15} Domestcity has been bombarded with public utilities and “conveniences” to the point of a reconfiguring saturation. Traditional collective, “public” spaces have been privatized, thus removing the notion of free access to this realm. There has been an annihilation of public and private spaces by their loss of distinction.
"In music and the dance, and for that matter, in poetry, the perception of order and the awareness of the whole depend on memory. These arts take place in elapsed time and can never be confronted whole...The movement unfolds, but what the form has just been or promptly will be are a matter of recollection and conjecture...There is, besides the "vocabulary", a sort of "syntax" of motion...So sequence must always involve subsequence."  

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strands of speed space - broken still hold memory of energy source...flow...event spaces emerge and swell

continuous interrupting weave interwaved
site plan
collapsed section

collapsed duration -- encloses; expanded experience has moments of spiral
buildings wrap around subject
legibility of built matter on natural landscape; meanders with topography - view in and out
Above ground level

Ground (road & path) level
Colors: blue = parking
grey = fast band
yellow = medium band
white = slow band
orange = wall datum
maroon = public infrastructure

Below ground level
memory - the concrete retaining wall symbolizes a kind of memory, which, in turbulent space, ruptures, in fast space, continues as single reality, in medium space, reverberates with fragmented reflections in the glass parking walls, and in slow space, flattens out and expands to multiple levels of direction and consciousness
flow
Daly City dwelling
Illustration Endnotes

page 2  

page 3  
_Father-Son-Holy Ghost House_, Ibid., p. 30.

page 6  

page 11  
_Victor Vasarely, Untitled Composition_, in Gyorgy Kepes, _The Nature And Art of Motion_ (New York: George Braziller, 1965), p. 44.

_and_


page 12  

page 42  

page 43  
_Victor Vasarely, Untitled Composition_, Ibid., p. 85.

*images not referenced above were created by Peony Quan*
References


