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BOOKSTORES/ SOFT CAPSULE:
A RETAIL PROTOTYPE FOR SMALL INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

BY

QIAO ZHANG

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

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HOUSTON, TEXAS
APRIL, 2001
ABSTRACT

Soft capsule is a new architecture prototype for the small independent business. It clusters the merchants of similar type (such like bookstores) with supporting program and common space. Soft capsule provides a structure for the small independent business to compete with chain stores by lowering down the cost of infrastructure. It enables the small business to operate in a larger system, while maintaining their individual scale and character. Soft capsule also animates an urban area with open air and pedestrian spaces.
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Lastly, thanks to my family, in China, for their love.

This thesis is dedicated to my mom...
BOOKSTORES/SOFT CAPSULE
A RETAIL PROTOTYPE FOR SMALL INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

QIAO ZHANG
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soft capsule business plan

lockers
storage
office
cashier
consulting
reading
other

publishers
lawyers
accountant
government
maintenance
infrastructure

other activity: coffee/readers seminar/poem reading/meet place............
bookstore/soft capsule program

6 book stores
+ 6 supporting retail business with
+ open air space
+ shared lobby space
bookstore/ soft capsule program

is a new retail architecture in the city which animates the existing urban context with adding open air space and pedestrian possibility and providing a urban space which could be shared by the buildings around it as their extension into the city.
existing retail typology
existing retail typology
existing retail typology
existing retail typology
BOOK SPACE C
BOOK SPACE D
overlapping
overlapping

bookstore gallery
bookshelves
bookshelves
unity and
differentiation
the shelf space

○ moving
○ seeing
unity and
differentiation
the shelf module
museum
● hotel
○ art school
● church
● residential

site
montrose
museum area
BOOKSHELVES
STRUCTURES
WRAPPINGS
BOOKSTORES
SKIN
THE CAPSULE

THE BUILDING
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