



VCU

Virginia Commonwealth University
VCU Scholars Compass

Theses and Dissertations

Graduate School

2017

positions of place: converging viewpoints in visual communication

Gregory J. Schmidt
Virginia Commonwealth University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Graphic Design Commons](#)

© The Author

Downloaded from

<https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/etd/4823>

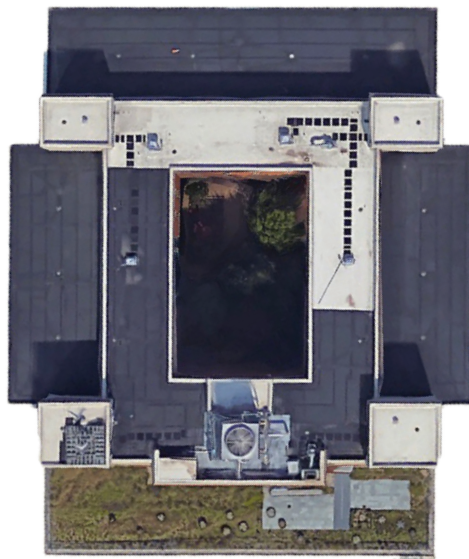
This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact libcompass@vcu.edu.

p

o

s

o



i

t

i

o

n

s

f

place

positions of place:
converging viewpoints in visual communication

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Fine Arts in Design,
Visual Communications at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Roy McKelvey, Main Advisor
Associate Professor, Department of Graphic Design

David Shields, Secondary Advisor
Associate Professor, Department of Graphic Design

Camden Whitehead, External Advisor
Associate Professor, Department of Interior Design

Steven Hoskins, Graduate Program Director
Associate Professor, Department of Graphic Design

Greg Schmidt
BA Graphic Design Flagler College 2012

“Every phenomenon can be experienced in two ways. These two ways are not arbitrary, but are bound up with the phenomenon—developing out of its nature and characteristics:

Externally — or — inwardly.

The street can be observed through the windowpane, which diminishes its sounds so that its movements become phantom-like. The street itself, as seen through the transparent (yet hard and firm) pane seems set apart, existing and pulsating as if “beyond.”

As soon as we open the door, step out of the seclusion and plunge into the outside reality, we become an active part of this reality and experience its pulsation with all our senses. The constantly changing grades of tonality and tempo of the sounds wind themselves about us, rise spirally and, suddenly, collapse. Likewise, the movements envelop us by a play of horizontal and vertical lines bending in different directions, as colour patches pile up and dissolve into high or low tonalities.”

—Wassily Kandinsky *Point and Line to Plane*, 17

"We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and the far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed."

—Michel Foucault *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, 1

"It becomes more urgent than ever to keep our contemporary consciousness of spatiality—our critical geographical imagination—creatively open to re-definition and expansion in new directions; and to resist any attempt to narrow or confine its scope."

—Edward Soja *Thirdspace*, 2

"Cities are both spatial and atmospheric, they give structure and shape to experience."

—Nigel Coates *Narrative Architecture*, 82

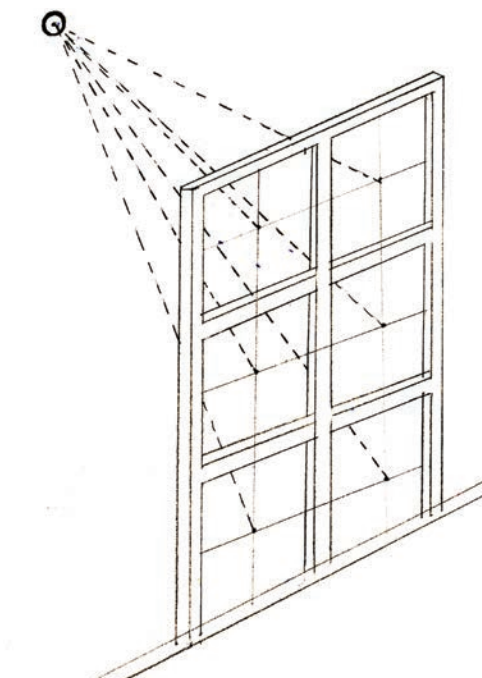
7	abstract
9	introduction
13	space & place
15	problem statement
19	projects & studies
47	precedents
61	thesis work
81	evaluation
85	bibliography

"You know, you can walk down streets—I mean I think I'm a fairly aware sort of person—hundreds of times, then suddenly notice something you've never seen before which suddenly changes your whole attitude to the street."

—Ralph Rumney *The Map is Not the Territory*, 70

"The limits and multiplicities of our frames of vision determine the boundaries and multiplicities of our world."

—Anne Friedberg *The Virtual Window*, 1



abstract

This thesis includes a body of work that explores our visual relationship to the physical spaces and places we inhabit in our everyday lives. Today we live in a complex world where we are bombarded with fragments of information and inundated with distractions. As designers, we are equipped with tools and methods that allow us to experience and interpret our environment through multi-faceted perspectives and from different viewpoints.

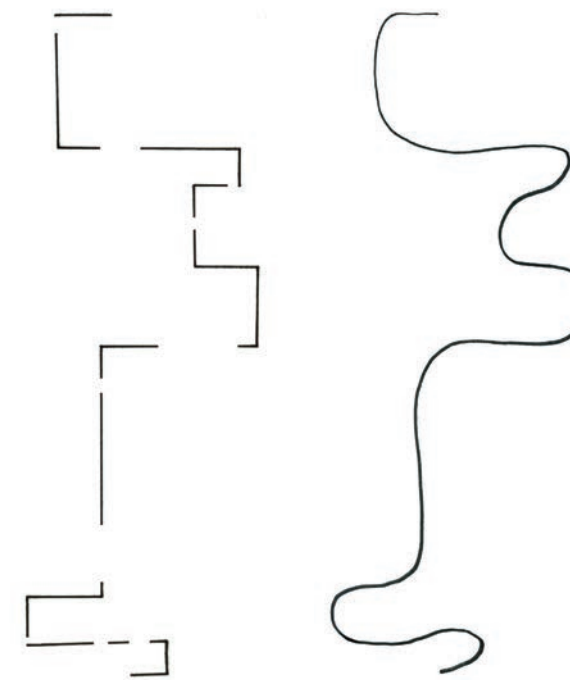
My approach to graphic design adopts techniques and practices from a mix of different disciplines. The work focuses on a design process that alternates between the parallel depiction of first-person and third-person vantage points mediated through contemporary technologies.

“We use our bodies, as the surveyor uses their instruments, to obtain data from multiple points of observation that are then passed to the mind, and from which it assembles a comprehensive representation of the world—the so called cognitive map.”

—Tim Ingold *Lines: A Brief History*, 88

“Not to find one’s way in a city means little, but to lose oneself in a city as one loses oneself in a forest requires practice. Then the street names must call out to the lost wanderer like the snapping of dry twigs, and the small streets of the city center must reflect the time of day as clearly as a mountain hollow.”

—Walter Benjamin *Myth and Metropolis*, 63



Towards the end of my senior year at Flagler College, a professor asked me to document a walk, not point A or B, but everything in the middle. It was while developing this project that I realized that I was living my life in fragments. Moving to and from pre-determined places with no regard for the path in between. A series of points connected by quick, rigid segments rather than a singular fluid gestural line. As a designer, this is when I realized the value of extending my gaze outside the boundaries of confined studios. And, as designers, when we do extend ourselves, we need to be equipped with an understanding of vision, the ability to recognize and relate multi-faceted relationships and to continually and regularly re-position ourselves to gain different perspectives.

"Our sense of place is in many ways more important than objective fact."

—Peter Turchi *Maps of the Imagination*, 28

"To experience in the active sense requires that one venture forth into the unfamiliar and experiment with the elusive and uncertain."

—Yi-Fu Tuan *Space and Place*, 9

(fig.1)



In 2013 I purchased a 1996 extended Dodge van (fig.1). Painted a lime green, it housed a bed, shelving units and a cooler. Equipped with a printed road map, a smart phone with GPS and an appetite for the open road, I began my journey in search of hidden America—the in between. Over four months I traveled 12,395 miles through twenty-six states. A romantic vision played in my head—reciting the words of Baudrillard's *America*, Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited*, Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* and Kerouac's *On the Road*—as I rolled through small towns, lonely cities, humble main streets, gaudy neighborhoods, national parks and lands dense with mountains, swamps, rainforests and canyons. While I planned to include visits to several national parks and visit a few friends, I really had no specific route planned. The spaces in between my known stops were little more than names on a map. They existed in my mind only as a series of white and yellow grids and curved lines overlaid on a beige background, dotted with green and blue shapes. I could zoom in and out on them with the swipe of a screen. As I rolled into new towns my senses were overwhelmed with the textures of a place—sight, smell, temperature, sound and taste. The top-down view became horizontal, the flat map became volumetric. The white lines transformed into asphalt streets. Buildings new and old grew out of the ground composed of brick, concrete and wood. The green shapes became parks, crowded with trees. The blue patches expanded into pristine lakes and muddy rivers. With the touch of a screen I was transported back into a flattened world of nondescript lines and shapes. The map gave me geographic understanding, where things were in relation to each other—but missing were the rhythms and textures of everyday life. Experiencing these localities in real time allowed me to learn about a space that would, in time, become a place.

"The sense of place is heavily dependent on practice and, particularly, the reiteration of practice on a regular basis... Experience is at the heart of what place means. Materiality, meaning and practice are all linked."

—Tim Cresswell *Place*, 2

"The space could be to place what the word becomes when it is spoken: grasped in the ambiguity of being accomplished, changed into a term stemming from multiple conventions, uttered as an act of one present, and modified by the transformations resulting from successive influences."

—Merleau-Ponty *Non-Places*, 173

"One only knows a spot once one has experienced it in as many dimensions as possible. You have to have approached a place from all four cardinal points if you want to take it in, and what's more, you also have to have left it from all these points. Otherwise it will quite unexpectedly cross your path three or four times before you are prepared to discover it."

—Walter Benjamin *Moscow Diary*, 25

viewpoint, n.

1 A place or position from which something is viewed, esp. one which offers a particularly extensive or attractive view of the surrounding area, a natural feature within it, etc.

2 A mental position or attitude from which a subject or question is considered; a point of view.

perspective, n.

1 Senses relating to light, vision, and visualization.

2 The appearance of viewed objects with regard to relative position

3 Geom. The relation of two figures in the same plane such that every point in each figure corresponds to a point in the other, the straight lines joining pairs of corresponding points meet in a point, and the corresponding lines in each figure intersect on a fixed straight line;

4 The action of looking into or through something.

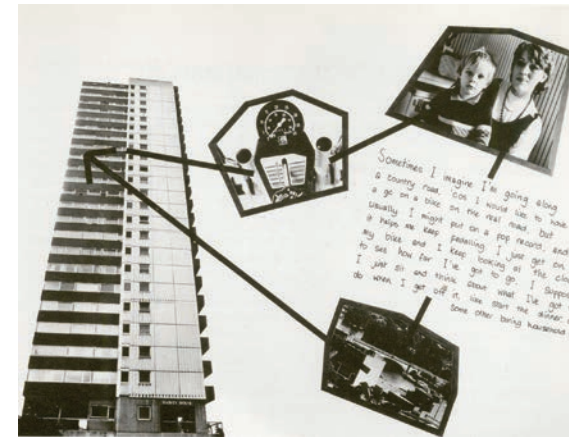
Oxford English Dictionary Online Database

"In short, space is a practiced place."

—Michel de Certeau *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 117

space & place

(fig.2)



Stephen Willats *Brentford Towers*, 1985

By visually juxtaposing the reductive and the complex, we gain a deeper sense of what space and place is for him. Space is the apartment building, with dimensions in length, height and width that contains objects. It becomes a place when it begins to define these objects within as specific to individuals and endowing them with meaning.

Differentiating between the concepts of space and place are fundamental to an increased understanding of spatial awareness. We understand the complexities of the world by how we interpret what we see and how we establish relationships through connection points. At first glance, the concepts of space and place may seem interchangeable and hard to separate. To be aware of these differences and identify a degree of separation between the two enables us to be more critical observers and thinkers about the visual world we inhabit. Our lived experiences in both space and place directly influence our attitudes and behaviors and ultimately affect our visual sensibilities and the products of visual communication we generate.

A space is an arbitrarily delineated region of the world. A place is reciprocal, we feed into it as much as it feeds into us; we are in a constant back and forth conversation with a place. Our bodies are at the center of place, entertaining personal thoughts, expressing attitudes and beliefs that shape our behavior. But, we don't experience a place holistically. A place is experienced through a sequence of limited and fragmented viewpoints, with each fragment woven together to create meaning, like an ongoing narrative. Stephen Willats (fig.2), an artist concerned with social life in spaces and places, writes the "message stemming from the fabric of the building plan is essentially reductive and object based, in contrast—the language of its actual occupation by people is rich and complex."¹

Space is a house, place is a home.

Place is only encountered and learned through actual physical experience.

Space is seen from a distance, place gains its richness in particularity.

Place is felt, lived, heard. We are able to scratch its surfaces.

Place is multi-sensory, it ignites our imagination and disturbs our intellect.

A place requires full immersion, we are vulnerable to its conditions.

Space is removed—cold and distant. Place is near—warm and intimate.

But in the end, as Tuan notes: "One cannot exist without the other."²

¹ Stephen Willats, *Stephen Willats: Between Buildings and People* (London: Academy, 1996), 7.

² Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 9.

"The traditional three-dimensional 'room' is dissolved by detaching display from the static wall surface and creating new relations through divisions, angles and directions... extending one space into another."

—Herbert Bayer *Herbert Bayer*, 30

"The possibility of an 'always on' connection when one moves through a city transforms our experience of space by enfolding remote contexts inside the present context."

—Adriana de Souza e Silva *From Cyber to Hybrid*, 262

"Space adjusting technologies do not just 'shrink' the distance between places, but actually work to blend spaces and places."

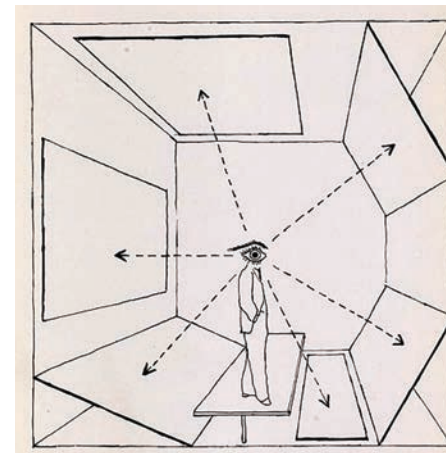
—Andrew Light *Philosophies of Place*, 32

"The power of the aerial image lies less in its descriptive capacity—compelling as that is—than its conditioning of how one sees and acts within the built environment."

—James Corner *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape*, 16

problem statement

(fig.3)



Herbert Bayer *Diagram of the Field of Vision*, 1935

This diagram became the foundation for the architecture and furniture gallery exhibition design architecture where he presents a variety of tilted angles.

Through making and researching, I came to learn that my thesis work is about seeing, observing and experiencing space and place. I question the way we see, just as Herbert Bayer questioned the way viewers experienced exhibition spaces (fig.3). The world is constantly changing and technology has opened up new ways of engaging with it. We are constantly connected to the internet—we are always "on."³ Our view of the environment and our relationship to it is changing. Our perceptions of space and place are becoming increasingly dependent on satellite technology and mobile devices which act as catalysts to experience the world in completely new ways.

Devices, such as smart phones with GPS location awareness technology, afford us the capacity to experience aerial views of the world paired with our usual eye level perspectives. Technologies such as Google Maps present the user with knowledge of their exact location in relation to their surroundings. This distant top-down view, seen as a series of points, planes and lines (or alternatively as low-resolution satellite photographs), is devoid of the richness of walking through the world "in real life." In Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*,⁴ he examines people walking in the New York City streets from the high vantage point of the top of the former World Trade Center. "For Certeau the birds eye view does not reveal, but rather obscures the city because it does not account for actual spatial practices like walking: the elementary form of city experience."⁵ With our hand-held devices we now can simultaneously experience actual spatial practices, like walking down a street, while watching ourselves, in the form of a moving pin, advancing toward a destination. Increasingly, the spaces and places we inhabit are defined by digital spaces just as much as digital spaces are defined by reality.

³ A. De Souza E Silva, "From Cyber to Hybrid: Mobile Technologies as Interfaces of Hybrid Spaces," *Space and Culture* 9, no. 3 (2006): 272. doi:10.1177/1206331206289022.

⁴ Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 91-110.

⁵ Kalin, Jason. Towards a Rhetoric of Hybrid Space Walking. (Proceedings of the Media Ecology Association. Volume 10. 2009), 52.

"The man with the magnifying glass—quite simply—bars the everyday world. He has a fresh eye before a new object. It gives him the enlarging gaze of a child."

—Gaston Bachelard *Poetics of Space*, 155

"Perspective subjects the artistic phenomenon to the stable and even mathematically exact rules, but on the other hand, makes that phenomenon contingent upon human beings, the individual: for these rules refer to the psychological and physical conditions of the visual impression and the way they take effect is determined by the freely chosen position of a subjective point of view."

—Erwin Panofsky *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, 67

"One measures the distances that actually separate two areas of the city, distances that may have little relation with the physical distance between them."

—Guy Debord *Theory of Dérive*



problem statement: **thesis argument**

It is critical in today's contemporary landscape to adopt a practice of actively observing the environment. The limitations of single viewpoints, operating in dense urban environments result in a constricted view of ourselves and our surroundings and subsequently limits our visual comprehension and sensibilities. Blending multiple viewpoints that simultaneously project the subjective and objective, intimate and distant and first- and third-person views, highlights and expands our comprehension of the complex realities of our surroundings. Contemporary tools and technologies afford designers an open and holistic vision of the world through a multiplicity of simultaneous viewpoints that call into question the narrow and seemingly limited first-person experience which previously dominated our experience.

As graphic designers, we communicate visually. The potency of that visual communication relies on our ability to leverage the mechanisms of visual perception. Perception is dependent on the idea of perspective, a way of organizing and interpreting information based on the position of the viewer and their experience of a space. *How* we see influences *what* we see. Perspective molds perception, which in turn frames our beliefs and attitudes. And, these attitudes distort our mental dispositions that then influence our behavior. Our unique conscious and unconscious behavior facilitates a sense of discovery and ultimately shapes our experience of the spaces and places in which we lead our everyday lives.

"Multiple, layered views exemplify the special power of diagrams, a capacity to show places or activities that we are unable to see directly from one fixed viewpoint."

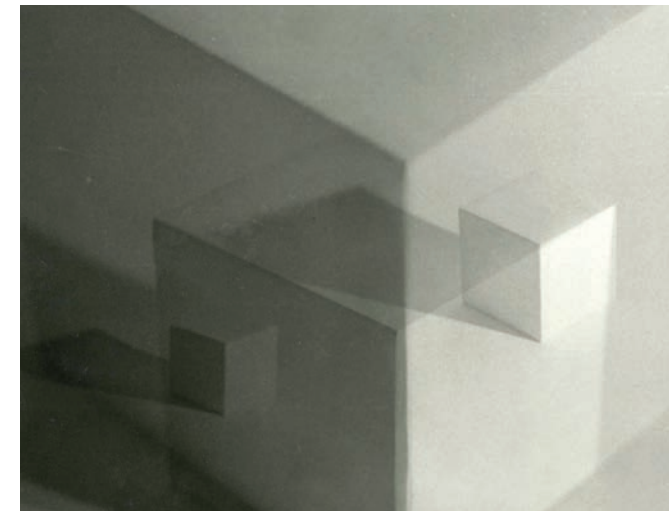
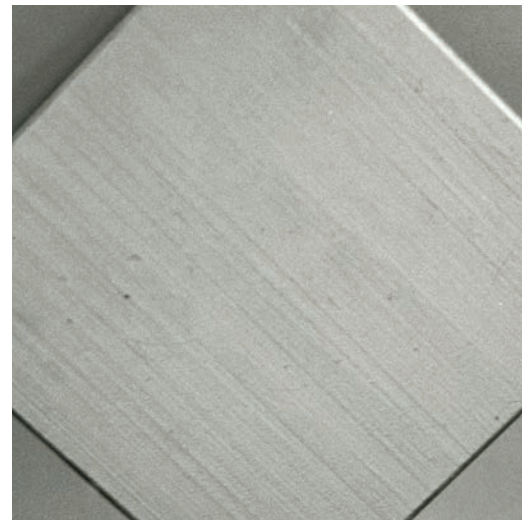
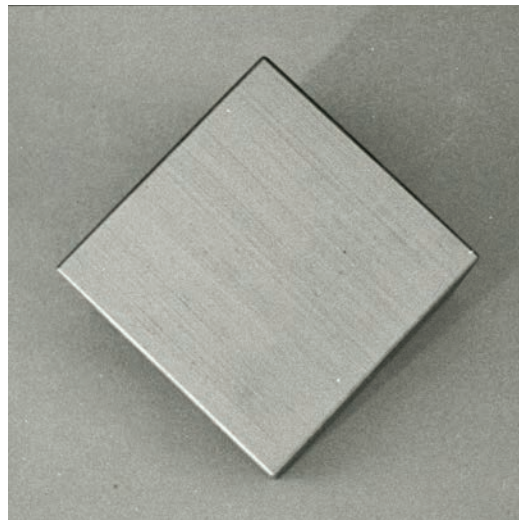
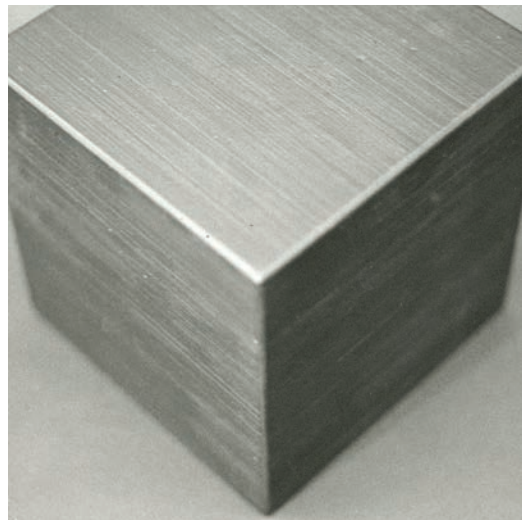
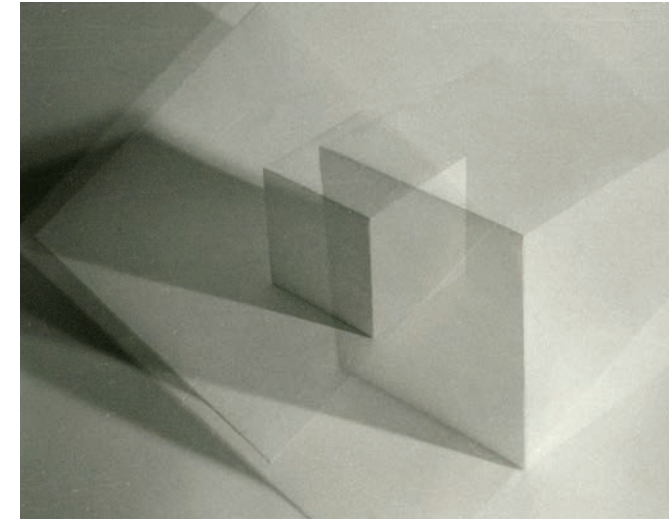
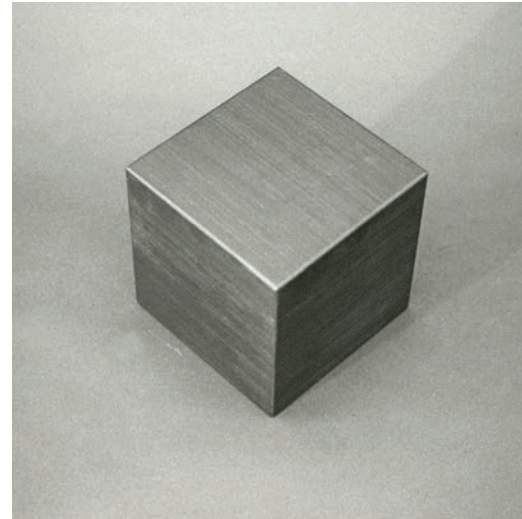
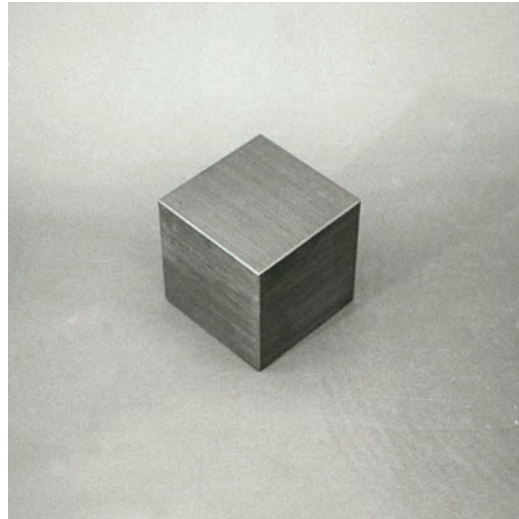
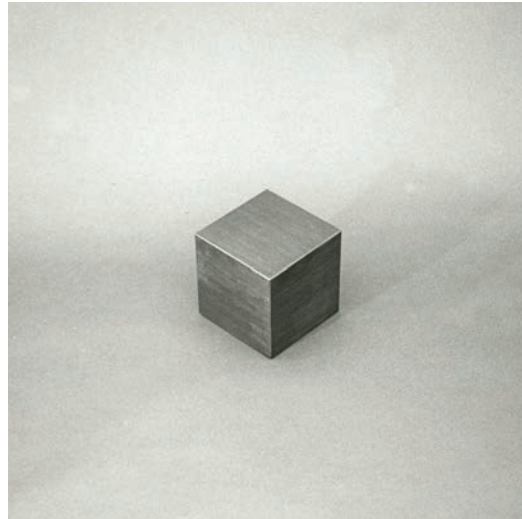
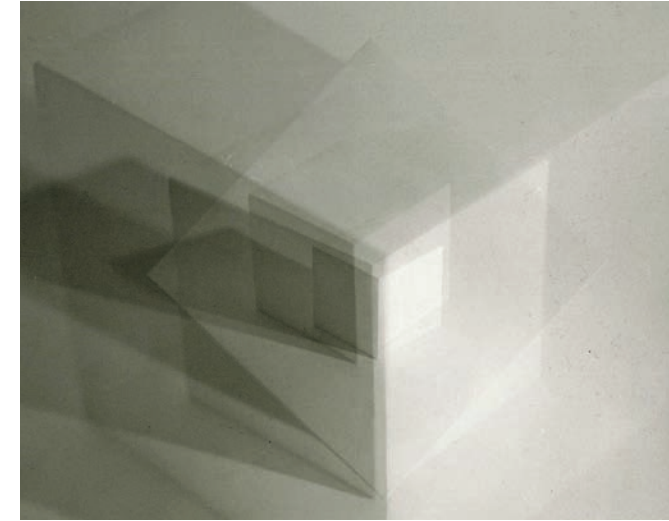
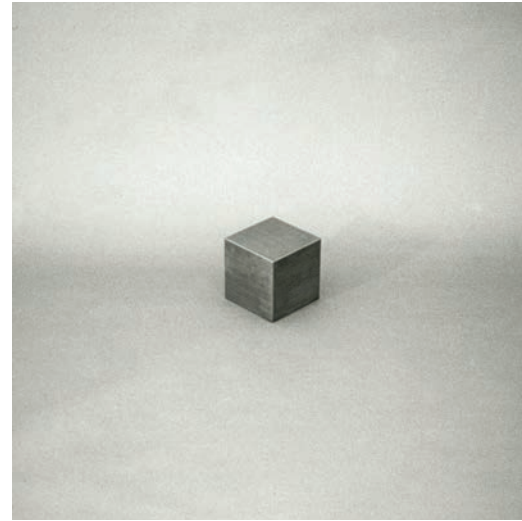
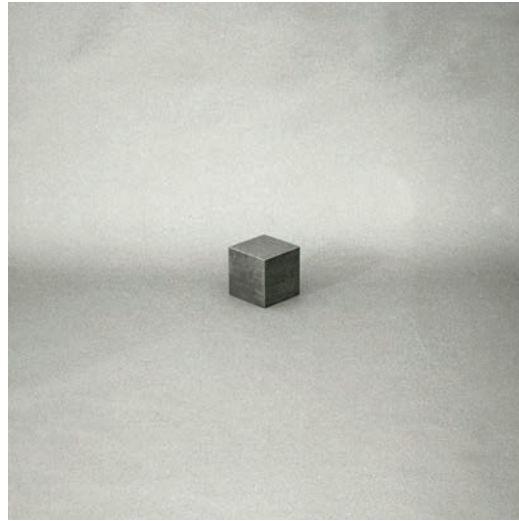
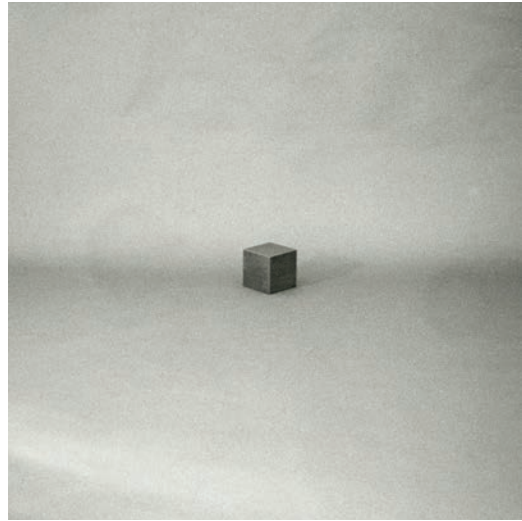
—Edward Tufte *Envisioning Information*, 188

"The aerial, or elevated view, inverts scale, shrinking a cityscape or magnifying bacteria and grants the viewer physical, temporal, material and moral distance."

—Stacy Boldrick *A Tool of Exploration: Wonder and Domination*, 11

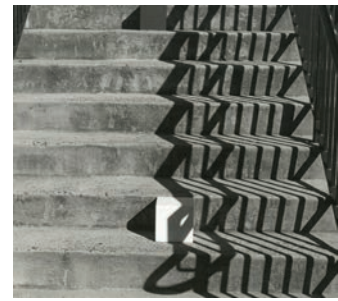


Reflecting back on my first three semesters in grad school here at VCU, I realized a main thread developing in my work—an interest in communicating different ways of seeing with an emphasis on spatial relationships in physical spaces and places.



Cameras are tools that extend vision. They have the ability to visually capture moments that happen within fractions of a second. In these initial studies, a cube was used in a controlled studio setting to explore scale, distance and tonal gradients. The photos were shot with a 35 mm Canon AE-1. The images were physically manipulated in the darkroom using specific techniques such as multiple exposure.

The cube was a starting point, an object void of meaning and context. Through these studies I noticed the capacity of a simple object to express the ideas of space. The cube became a trigger for framing and shaping perspective. I began to question the content of the photograph extending beyond the borders of the frame. I became aware of the tool itself, the camera and its ability to change space with the lens and to change time with adjustments to exposure.

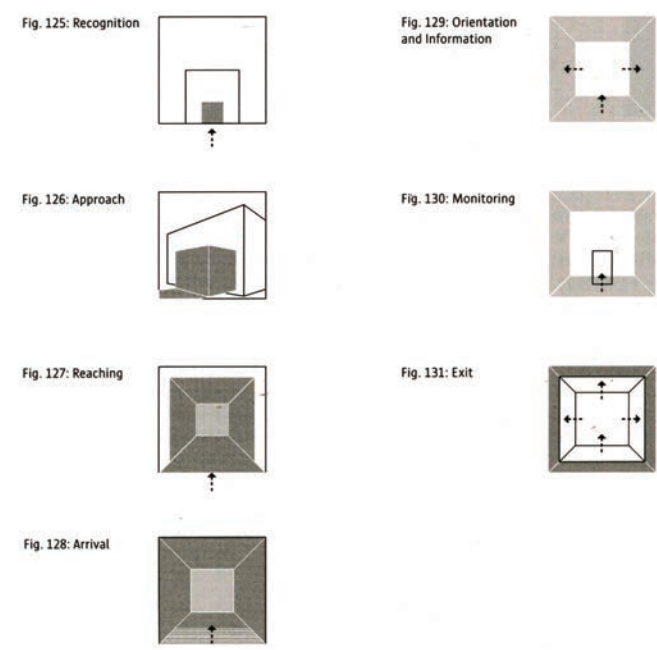


In these studies, I brought the cube out of the confines of the studio. It is here where I started to think about space as a sum of relationships between two points. Using a black cube and a white cube, I started to look at spatial parameters between two objects. In each image of these sequences of photos, one of the cubes moves a specific distance away from the other stationary cube. The goal of this study is to visualize the idea of a threshold space, a transition from one space to another. "Thresholds are a preface to a space and create not only transition, but also the space itself...they thrive on ambiguity of both opening and closing off spaces."⁶ The cubes started to stretch, close, connect, separate, expand and contract space. This process became valuable later in my thesis work, specifically in working and thinking with typographic structure and its ability to distort spatial representations.

⁶ Till Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2014), 10.

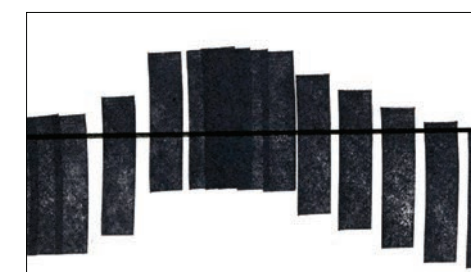
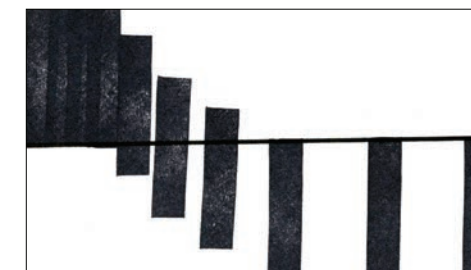
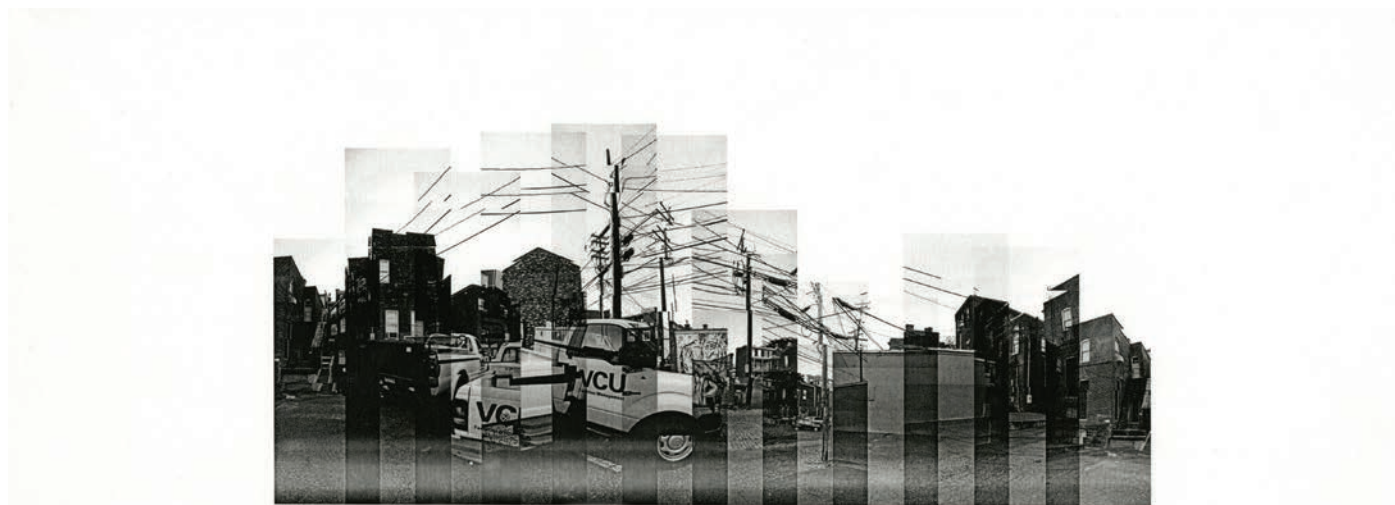
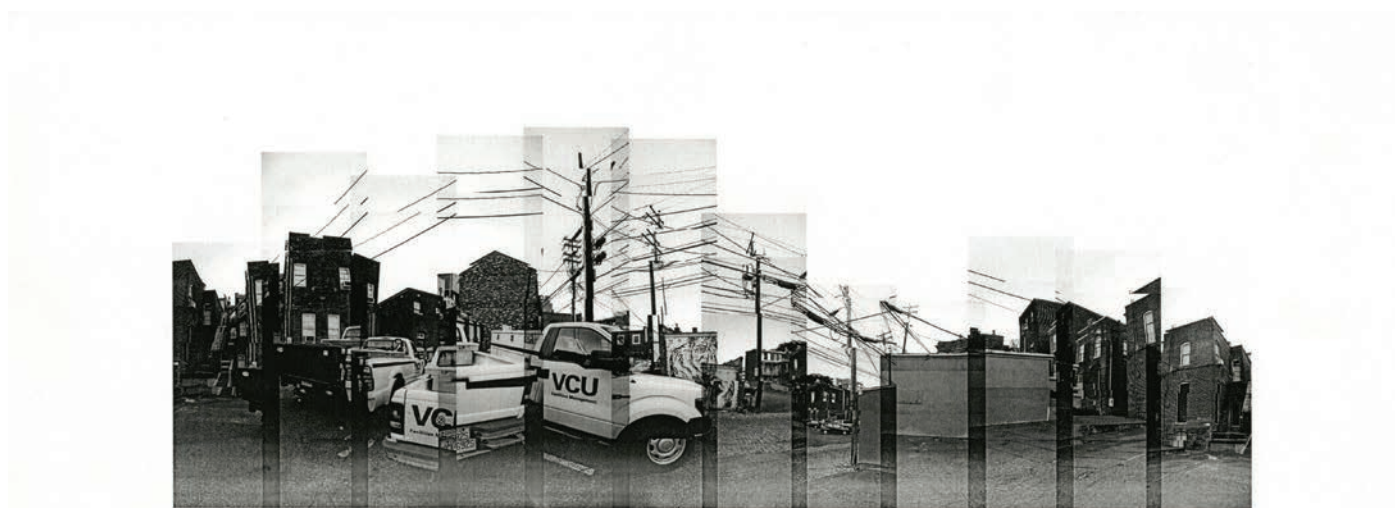


(fig.4)



In this last threshold study, the cubes defined the boundaries of the photograph. The more the cubes separate, the more the image expands while the height remains constant. These studies led me to think about movement in the physical environment and the progression of steps we experience through threshold spaces. Boettger diagrams these steps (fig.4) where he notes that a "threshold space is strongly determined by the sequence in which space is experienced." 7 These design concepts were critical to my understanding of spatial analysis, organization and ultimately representation.

7 Till Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2014), 122.



This study is an extension of the threshold studies discussed earlier and began with a series of conceptual diagrams that explored the transition of movement and density of space along different walking paths in Richmond. The middle line represents my path. I then used a progression of ink stamps to indicate both density of objects and speed of movement in the environment. The area above the middle line represents high density areas—compact spaces. Conversely, the area below the line indicates open spaces. The horizontal distance between the rectangles indicates speed of movement—the greater the separation, the faster the movement.

The sequences on the left page are a composite of forty-eight images from a camera rotated on a stationary tripod. It is a three-hundred-sixty degree representation of a parking lot. Each column is a portion of space captured by the camera in a series of successive vertical shots. I was interested in how our perception of a familiar place, such as a parking lot, changed as a result of a process of expanding and contracting relationships. I noticed a connection between the process of overlapping and the concept of parallax—the change in the positioning of two objects as a result of the change in the position of the viewer moving through space in which “Spatial definition is ordered by angles of perception—synthesis of foreground, middle ground and distant view form the basis of complete perception, a fusion of the subjective and objective.”⁸ This led to me think about how experience can be captured through a camera and manipulated using collage techniques. The relationship between fragmentary and continuous movement offered insight into a working method shown in later work.

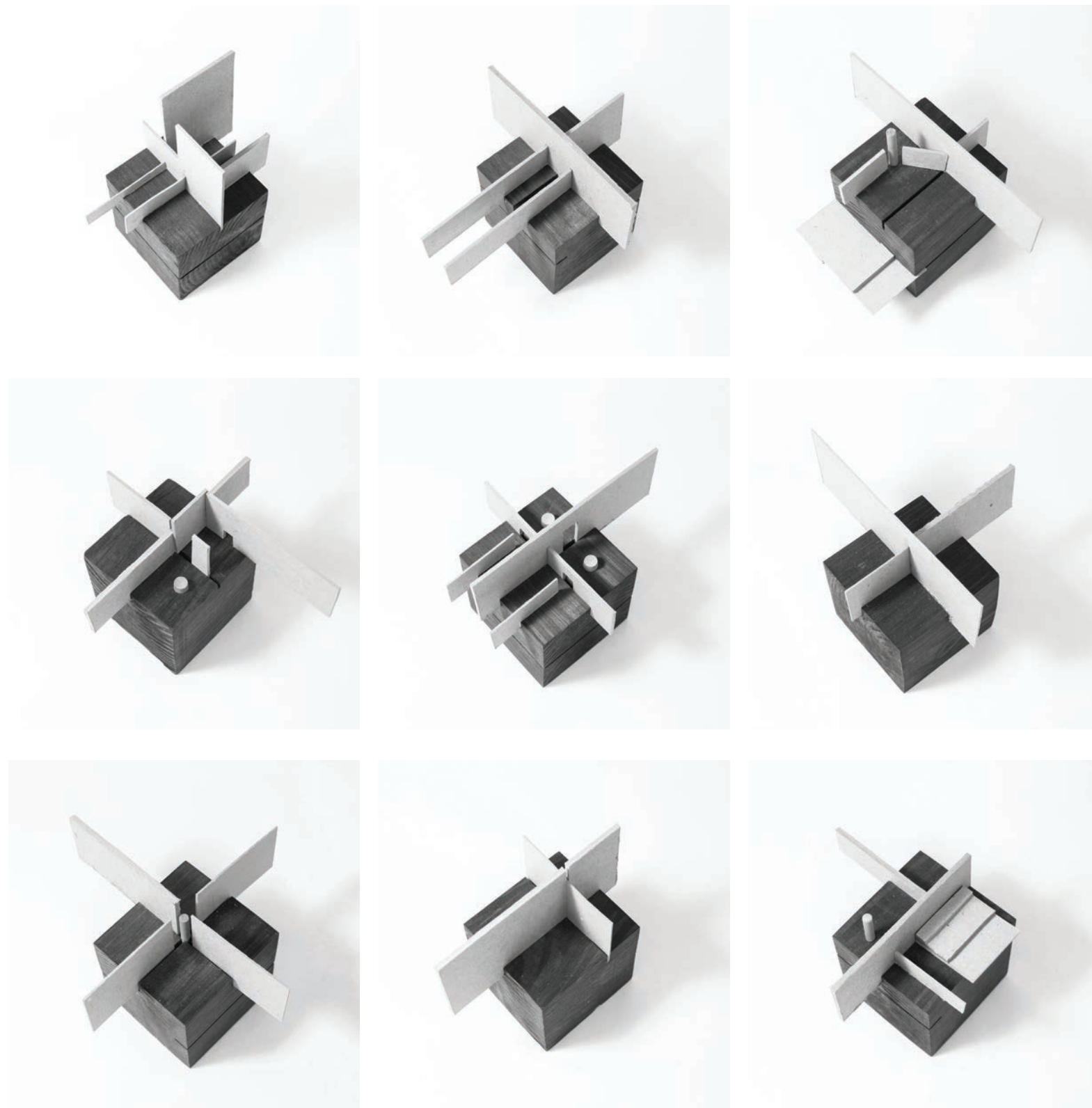
⁸ Steven Holl, *Parallax* (Basel ; Boston ; Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2001), 61.



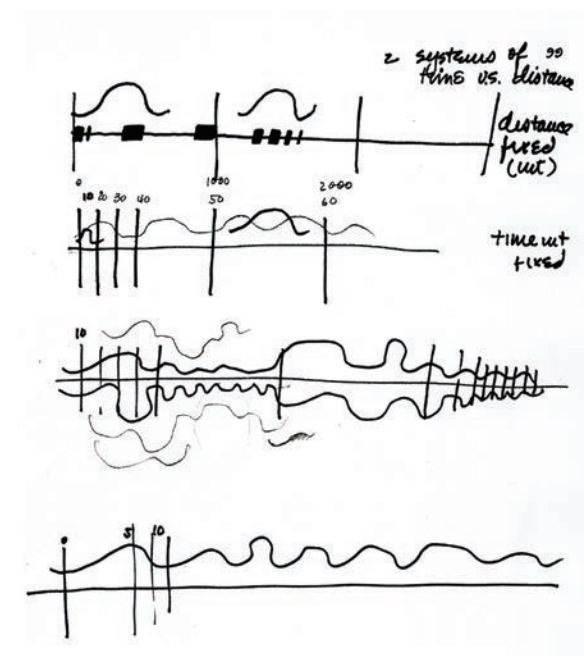
In my second semester, I investigated an abandoned plot of land—the site of a mall which had been razed, leaving behind a 50 acre concrete footprint.⁹ I worked on a proposal for a park to occupy the site and investigated it through a series of scale models. After a few visits to the site, I began to collect data from Google maps. Aerial views helped to identify key axes that would play a critical role in developing the programs and layout of the park. This view allowed me to establish relationships between the site and the communities that were in close proximity to the former mall (detail on next page).

⁹ Azalea Mall opened in 1963. Located a few miles north of downtown Richmond adjacent to highway 95, the doors closed in 1996 and was razed in 1999.





(fig.5)



Lawrence Halprin *motations*, 1959-1971¹⁰

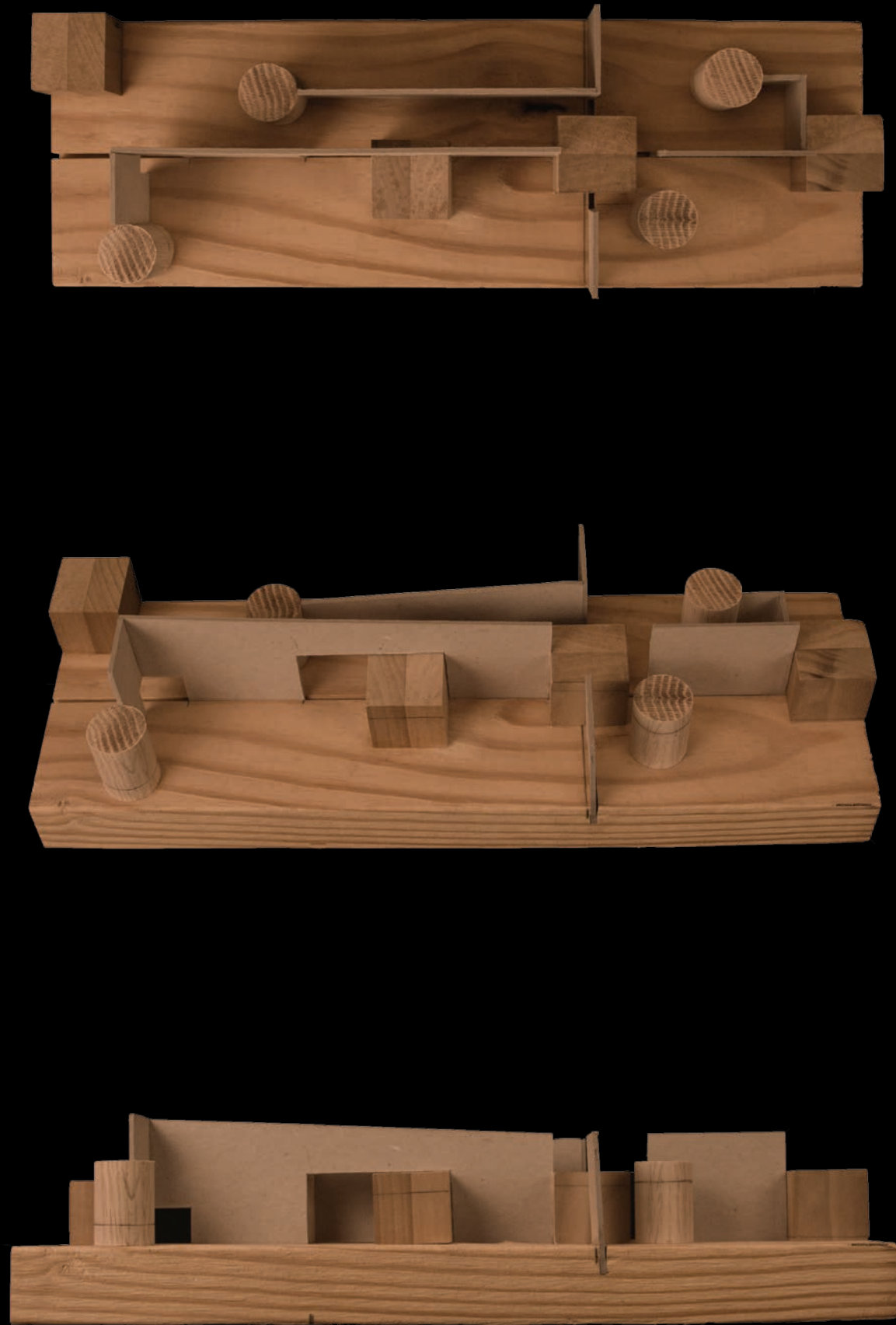
American landscape architect and designer Lawrence Halprin coined the term "motations," a fusion of movement and notation as diagrammatic representations of movement through spaces using fundamental principles of music as a framework.

WEAVE		DISTRIBUTE	
GROUP		ENCIRCLE	
LAYER		HOOK	
DISCARD		DROOP	
SCATTER		CREASE	
CONTINUE		SUSPEND	
EXPAND		SPREAD	
DILATE		FOLD	
OPEN		BEND	
JOIN		TIGHTEN	

I again started with cubes as a way to think about space conceptually. This time, I physically built onto the cubes, using chipboard to create forms guided by two axes initially identified through the aerial view. This method of working revealed ideas of cause and effect relationships—what happens when one element encounters another? Does it weave? Crease? Expand? In this work, I was influenced by Lawrence Halprin's *Motations* (fig.5), and discussions of unity, force and change in the book, *Forms of Japan*.¹¹ As a result, I began to consider the potential intersections of time, movement and form through a series of diagrams and models. I developed systems of hierarchy within the models, expressed by color, thickness and material.

¹⁰ Lawrence Halprin, *Lawrence Halprin notebooks*, 1959-1971 (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1973), 95-105.

¹¹ Kojiro, Yuichiro. *Forms in Japan* (Honolulu: East-West Center Pr., 1965).



Later in the project, I realized that the value of constructing these models had less to do with building a park, but more in exposing me to an analytical approach to thinking about space. It became an exploration of relationships between objects seen from different viewpoints—a constant conversation between top-down, oblique and eye level views. Working in three dimensions afforded these perspectives, similar to El Lissitzky's Prouns where "the viewer has to move around the Proun, a process that reveals multiple axes."¹² Oscillating between three different viewpoints allowed me to closely examine relationships, connection points and areas of separation and how they affected movement, form and perception.

¹² Victor Margolin, *The struggle for utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1946* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 32.

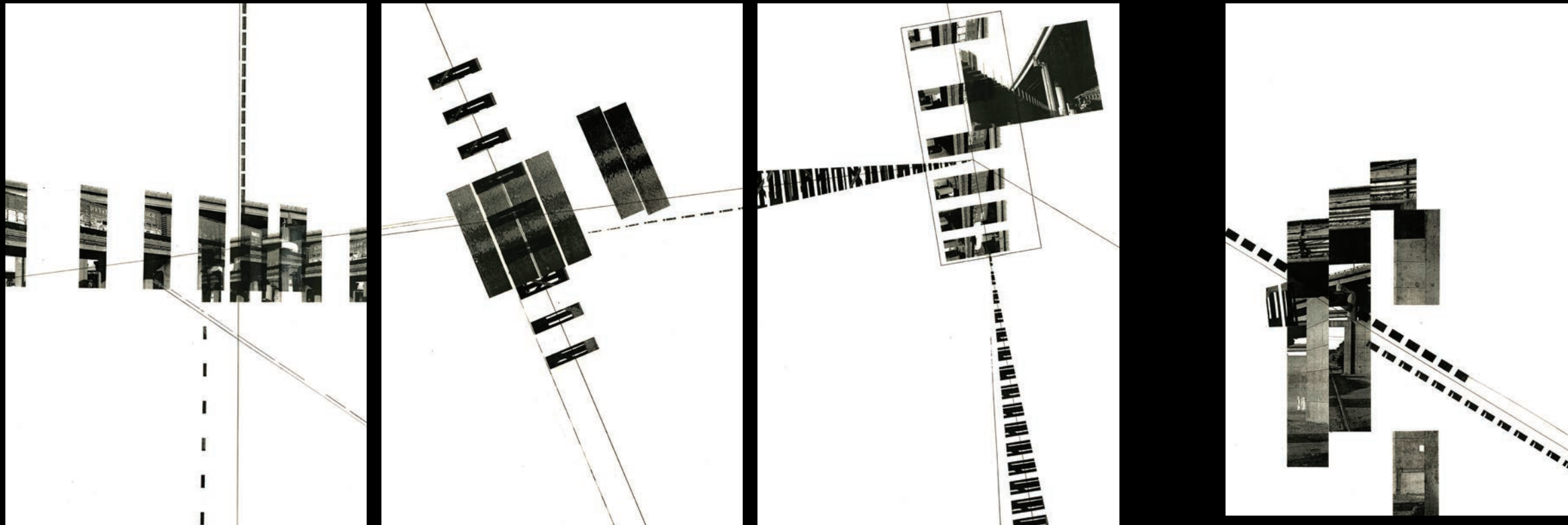


In this project I began to translate the concepts I learned in the Azalea Mall project to two-dimensional work. These images depict the four corners of the intersection of Grace and Harrison Streets in Richmond, Virginia. Each photograph is a composite of thirty to sixty individual photographs collaged into larger images, eight feet high by four feet wide. Each image was taken from a single stationary position while moving the camera to slightly different angles. The photographs were then placed, overlapped, fragmented, distorted, over-exposed, under-exposed, reduced and enlarged. The work was influenced by the photographic work of David Hockney where his work shows how "vision is selective—it scans, skips, pauses, dwells, moves slowly, quickly, sporadically—each frame contributes to the understanding of a place derived from the sequence of a whole."¹³ Just as Hockney was concerned with fragmented photographs placed together in an attempt to form an impression of actual visual experience, these photographs were an attempt to create a visceral experience of the buildings. Just as our eyes scan our environment in reality, these compositions allow our eyes to jump openly from image to image within the frame.

The edges of photographs form boundaries that are a reflection of the geometric nature of the place. The process used to take the original photographs was measured and calculated while the collaging process was more intuitive and fluid. The resulting representation of these buildings allows the viewer to re-enter this intersection with new eyes. It generates new forms and different ways of experiencing and representing spaces. This created a way of "turning experience itself into a way of seeing."¹⁴ The camera was a tool that pulled me outside of the studio and into the street.

¹³ David Hockney and Paul Melia, *David Hockney* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 120.

¹⁴ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (Penguin Books, 1973), 24.



you hear the cry of a distant horn

a lowly rumble abruptly transitions into a symphony of metal objects being ripped apart

the asphalt under your feet thumps violently

the brakes grind

the train slows just enough to reveal itself

the locomotive drags unmarked cargo:

wheat, coal, lumber

it rounds the corner

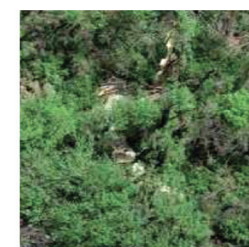
it picks up speed

the noise fades

This project started with the goal of investigating an area called Shockoe Bottom in Richmond. Again, starting from an aerial view provided by Google Earth, I decided to explore four intersection points: where 14th Street, the Southern Rail Road track, Virginia Street and Highway 95 intersect the Kanawha Canal. This was an exploration of cause and effect relationships. Using a DSLR camera, I captured images from the ground—a transition from an aerial view to a first-person view. The photographs were then cut and collaged in a way that reflected the speed of moving through the environment and my experience of it through repetition and rhythm of form. The photographs were printed on transparent paper. Through a process of overlapping, images started to mesh together, while others pulled apart from each other, reflecting the tensions of movement of pedestrians, cars, trains and noise atmosphere. Beyond using images to capture the experience of this place, I wanted to capture it through words in an attempt to communicate a more emotive sensation.

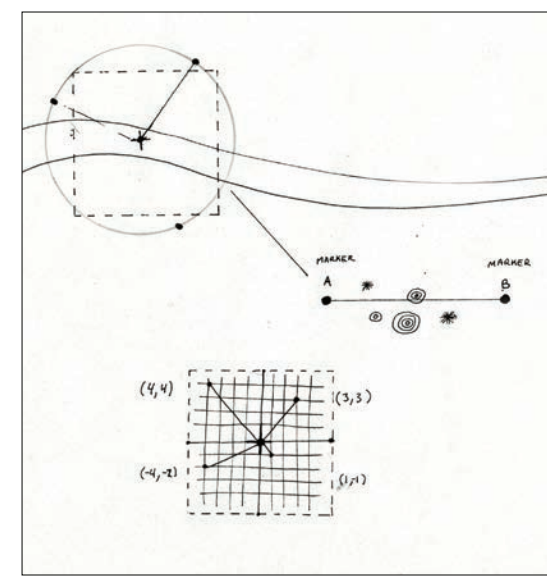
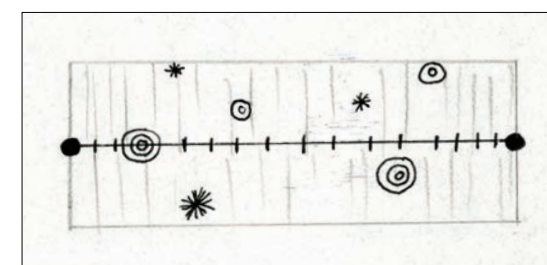


2:32 pm
 2:33 pm
 2:34 pm
 2:35 pm
 2:36 pm
 2:37 pm



This project is a response to the study of a small urban creek in Richmond, Virginia.¹⁵ The city of Richmond had plans to re-route the creek in an effort to minimize pollutants from entering the Chesapeake Bay. However, due to lack of public involvement and poor planning, the City's current proposal is not comprehensive or sustainable and would mean the destruction of 7.4 acres of forests and wetlands including habitat for many native species.

¹⁵ Reedy Creek is an urban tributary of the James River. The city proposed a stream restoration, primarily to align with the remediation goals of the Watershed Implementation Plan established by the Chesapeake Bay Program.



My work on the project was fundamentally an exercise in manipulating points, lines and planes. I began by marking a boundary around a subsection of the Reedy Creek watershed, a way of surveying the proposed re-routing area. I placed two posts in the ground and connected them with 60-foot cotton string I used this string as a guide for documenting the space with a camera—capturing an image every ten feet and at one minute intervals. The focus of the camera was placed on the string, leaving the background blurred. I used these photographs to create three posters. Each poster is a representation of the same location, at the same time of day. Each series of images were shot on different days and from a different view point:—beside, below or above the string. The photos were then collaged on top of each other and centered. The edges of the individual photographs form a grid, demarcating specific moments along the string's path. These boundaries act as a mechanism to transform and displace typographic elements.



As a result of the process, unfamiliar combinations of texture and language emerged. The syntactic organization of words creates a network of various rhythms and intensities. These operations mimic physical movement of the body through space. Just you can enter a map from any direction, the words on the poster can be read in any order. Syntax is determined by the viewer: up, through, forward, ahead, down, forward, beside—a walk through the woods. The points are the posts, the string is the line and the photographs are a series of planes—fragments of a captured reality. The line serves as a guide, a point of reference, exploiting the tension between the simplicity of the string and the density of the woods—the intimate and the distant. The photographs are a compilation of sixty feet of woods, layered together, stacked in time, a compression of space. Light intensities changed with different vantage points along the string's path. The horizon line is flipped vertically, distorting perception and destabilizing spatial comprehension. Instead of perceiving a horizontal split—sky and earth—the viewer experiences a vertical split, a way of defamiliarizing the familiar. This was a way to expose and enhance the richness and complexity of the watershed.

"The scenery of urban towns is often revealed in a series of jerks or revelations."

—Gordon Cullen *The Concise Townscape*, 11

"Perspective is fascinating for many reasons: it is unencompassably complicated as a metaphor, it is ghettoized as a technique, it lives in a limbo between disciplines, visiting many discourses and not belonging to any one."

—James Elkins *The Poetics of Perspective*, 269

The translation of multi-perspective experience has been addressed in many fields and for a variety of purposes. By examining how visual artists, photographers, writers, architects, and video game designers alternate between different perspectives, we can gain a deeper understanding of how perceptions of space and place can transform and add value to visual literacy and the field of visual communication. Driven by distinct philosophies and ideologies, each discipline provides context for analyzing, experiencing and representing complex realities—painters offer multi-faceted representations of objects in space; photographers use sequential images and photo montage to express multiple perspectives; literature provides examples of first-, second- and third-person perspectives; architecture considers the world from both plan and elevation views; the related discipline of urban planning addresses space through macro- and micro-lenses; video games offer first-person points of view and third-person, top-down perspectives situating players in virtual environments.

The following pages examine a few particular masters in each of their respective disciplines and how they utilize multiple viewpoints in their process and as a tool for communication.

"The discovery of perspective is attributed to the architect Brunelleschi and it has been suggested that it originated in his desire to understand the mechanism that governs the apparent diminution of architectural elements according to their position and distance from the eye."

—Richard Talbot *Speculations on the Origins of Linear Perspective*, 66

"Perspective, which measures things backwards into space from the eye, creates an accurate visual picture of the world at a particular moment, while collage allows multiplicity of reference and memory as well as description."

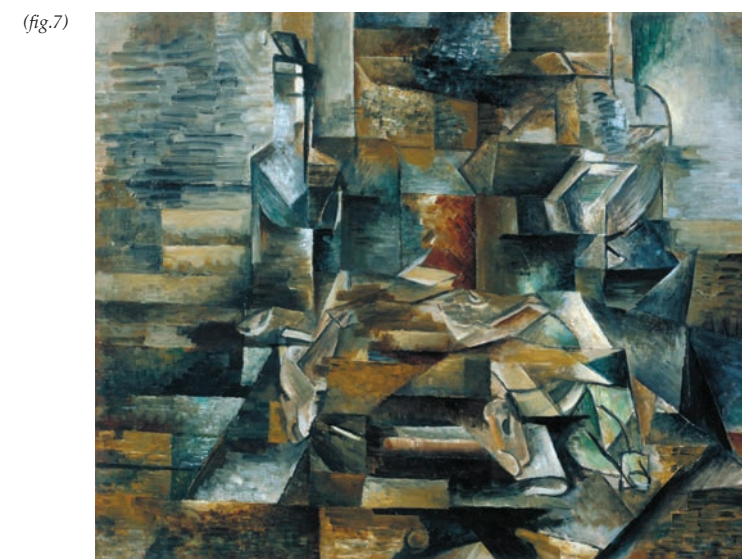
—Paul Melia *David Hockney*, 110

"Vision is selective—it scans, skips, pauses, dwells, moves slowly, quickly, sporadically."

—Paul Melia *David Hockney*, 120

"The essence of our urban experiences is the process of movement through a sequential and variegated series of spaces."

—Lawrence Halprin *Cities*, 463



(fig.6) Sandro Botticelli, *Last Miracle and the Death of Saint Zenobius* c. 1500-05

(fig.7) Georges Braque, *Bottle and Fishes* c. 1910-12

(fig.8) David Hockney, *Fountains Abbey Yorkshire* 1983

precedents: visual arts

The visual arts are predicated on vision—how we see and ultimately how we represent visual information. The renaissance established a new way of looking with the advent of linear perspective. It was intimately linked to the newfound attitude towards objectively exploring the world.

In the Renaissance the development of linear perspective was tied to the idea of depicting a more accurate view of the world. Linear perspective (fig.6) is centered on the individual—drawn from the vantage point of the human eye. This is a seemingly rational and objective method of translating and representing three dimensions on a two-dimensional plane. However the "renaissance perspective attempts to reduce or negate the plurality of viewpoints in human experience."¹⁶

Cubism, in reaction to the prevailing use of perspective representations, considered the totality of perception of the world from multiple simultaneous points of view. "It is as if the painter had freely moved around his subject, gathering information from various angles and viewpoints."¹⁷ Artists such as Braque (fig.7) and Picasso challenged notions of spatial perspectives, perceptions and experiences of space.

Drawing from the lessons of cubism, David Hockney composed with photographs, seen as fragments, each taken from a slightly different angle and placed in succession to form an impression of traveling through a space and time. (fig.8) He dispensed "with the one point perspective from a fixed position established in the renaissance, in favor of a system in which he felt more accurately conveyed human perception, marked by many points of focus and moments."¹⁸

¹⁶ Fernande Saint-Martin, *Semiotics of Visual Language* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 68.

¹⁷ John Golding, *Cubism: A History and an Analysis 1907-1914* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), 12-13.

¹⁸ Marco Livingstone and David Hockney, *David Hockney* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 235.

"And yet it is photography that has taught us to see from the unexpected vantage point."

—John Szarkowski *The Photographers Eyes*, 10

"Cameras establish an inferential relation to the present (reality is best known by its traces), they provide an instantly retro active view of experience."

—Susan Sontag *On Photography*, 166

"Unlike any other visual image, a photograph is not a rendering, an imitation or interpretation of it's subject, but actually a trace of it."

—John Berger *About Looking*, 54

"The almost endless range of gradations, subtlest differences in the gray values, belongs to the fundamental properties of photographic expression."

—Moholy-Nagy *Vision in Motion*, 188

"The truth of the photograph lies in the camera having been at a particular point in space at a particular time."

—Frédéric Pousin *Seeing From Above*, 192

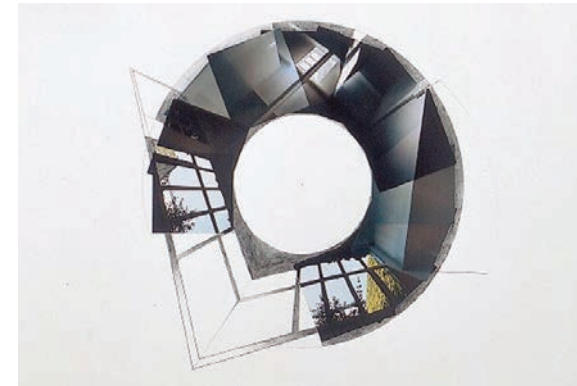
"Flick outlines a cartography that does not didactically instruct how to look, but instead teaches the responsibilities of an autonomous, imaginative engagement, the necessity of multiple ways of seeing and the inescapable places of geography."

—Micheal Dear *Trajectories*, 31

"The street is the stage for much human interaction...first I am looking down at it closely... and then I move the camera up and focus on what is moving along, the flow of men and women, appearing, disappearing and pulsating."

—Ray Metzger *Light Lines*, 11

(fig.9)



(fig.10)



(fig.11)



(fig.12)



(fig.13)



Ever since its inception in the mid-19th century, artists have used photography as a way to express and communicate ideas through mechanical, reproducible processes. These particular photographers have pioneered ways of thinking about, capturing and producing images that go beyond traditional forms of representation.

Jan Dibbets constructs compositions by combining multiple photographs together to express a familiar places into completely new spaces in a way that transforms both the picture plane and the individual photographs (fig.9).

Robert Flick stretches the landscape in his series of compositions called *sequential views*. Each photograph is formed together to make a whole, simultaneously expanding, contracting, zooming in and out that illuminates the notion of a collective experience (fig.10).

Ray Metzker's photographs are marked by strong contrast and vigorous intensity. From a distance, his composites can be read in totality. Upon closer inspection we start to uncover individual images that start to explain a narrative of people walking through space. The viewer oscillates between the two, reading them simultaneously or sequentially (fig.11).

Jan Groover's initial triptychs illustrate a space captured at different intervals from a stationary position. As she developed her working method, she moved the camera around spaces, capturing spatial experience through time and movement (fig.12).

Harry Callahan used double exposures to show two different viewpoints, simultaneously. In his image *Eleanor*, he illustrates the inside and outside on a two-dimensional surface, altering our perception of this space (fig.13).

Each of these photographers presents unique working methods, before, during and after the photograph was captured. They have inspired me to look beyond the camera or as a instrument as an extension of the eye. Rather, the camera became a vessel that carried me into physical spaces and places that reflected my gestures, movements and positions.

(fig.9) Jan Dibbets, *Musée Zadkine photo collage*, 1994

(fig.10) Robert Flick, *DJ Barn View*, 1979-1990

(fig.11) Ray Metzker *Chicago*, 1959

(fig.12) Jan Groover *Super Dokata*, 1997

(fig.13) Harry Callahan, *Eleanor, Chicago*, 1953

"Like everyone else, I presume, I feel an attraction for zero points, for the axes and points of reference from which the positions and distance of any object in the universe can be determined."

—Georges Perec *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, 82

(fig.14)

CORNER

You watch anything long enough and you can become an expert at it. Get to know how it lives, what it eats. Tonight the corner is cold and nothing is really going on. You can hear the dice clicking on the curb and every truck and souped-up shitmobile that rolls in from the highway announces itself with bass.

The corner's where you smoke, eat, fuck, where you play selo. Selo games like you've never seen. I know brothers who make two, three hundred a night on the dice. Always somebody losing big. But you have to be careful with that. Never know who'll lose and then come back with a 9 or a machete, looking for the rematch. I follow Cut's advice and do my dealing nice and tranquilo, no flash, not a lot of talking. I'm cool with everybody and when folks show up they always give me a pound, knock their shoulder into mine, ask me ...

In contrast to the visual arts, literature offers us a sense of simultaneous perspectives through shifts in narrative voice. In his collection of short stories, *Drown*,¹⁹ author Junot Díaz uses this technique to seamlessly weave together his characters. Each character's unmistakable personality develops from their distinctive point of view, told from either a first-, second-, or third-person perspective that is maintained across the entirety of the story. (fig.14) Similar narrative techniques are found in Ernest Hemingway's *On the Quai at Smyrna*²⁰ and Italo Calvino's *If on a Winters Night a Traveler*.²¹

These writers were especially influential in my thinking about language. As visual communicators, we use language and typographic form symbiotically as a means to express an idea visually. Language and form have the ability to intersect in various ways to enhance the representation of our multiplicitous world we inhabit today.

19 Junot Díaz, *Drown* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008), 56.

A Dominican-American author, he relies on the power of words to shape perception and immerse readers in his stories. In his debut work, *Drown*, Díaz offers insight into a variety of young protagonists who are a reflection of his experience living in Santo Domingo, New York City, and New Jersey. Díaz has the ability to aggressively pull the reader into the experience of a place, immersing them into an unknown but intimate world.

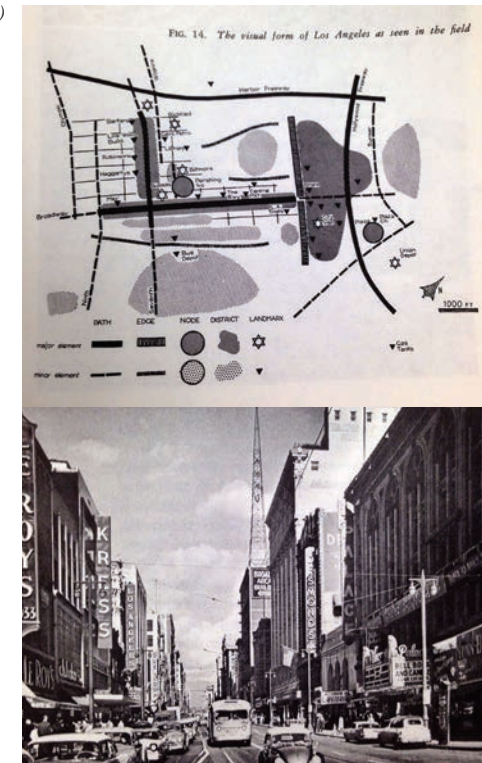
20 Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time: Stories* (New York: Collier, 1986).

21 Italo Calvino, *If On a Winter's Night a Traveler* (London: David Campbell Publishers, 2000).

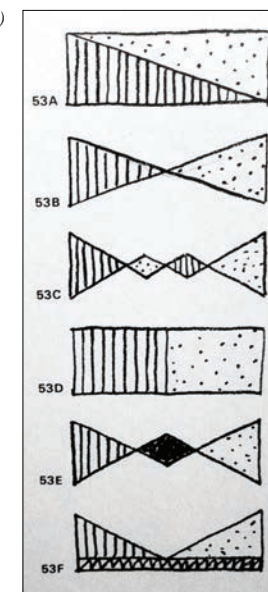
"The elevation perspective subjects the artistic phenomenon to the stable and even mathematically exact rules, but on the other hand, makes that phenomenon contingent upon human beings, the individual: for these rules refer to the psychological and physical conditions of the visual impression and the way they take effect is determined by the freely chosen position of a subjective point of view."

—Erwin Panofsky *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, 67

(fig.15)



(fig.16)



53A gradually melting into each other

53B first disappears before second builds up

53C using hints and echoes to alternate character

53D abrupt and shocking transition

53E transition mediated by a connecting link

53F contrariwise, connection maintained by a continuous ground

In the field of urban planning, Kevin Lynch, architect and teacher, analyzed spaces through macro- and micro-lenses, blending the objective and subjective. Intersecting the physical environment with psychological perception and interaction, he examines how we see in his book, *Image of the City*.²² He was specifically interested in mental mapping—analyzing a person's perception of places, how they move through space, and how they interact with objects, absorbing information by considering contrasting views from above a space and a view from within (fig.15).

A View from the Road investigates and documents views and perceptions from the highway through mobility. Particularly interesting is the investigation of sequential form and the choreography of movement within the highway (fig.16). Lynch uses devices of counter points, similar to music, in an effort to describe different characteristics of form in his diagram of transitions: "two or three progressions played simultaneously and meeting, diverging and reacting against each other."²³

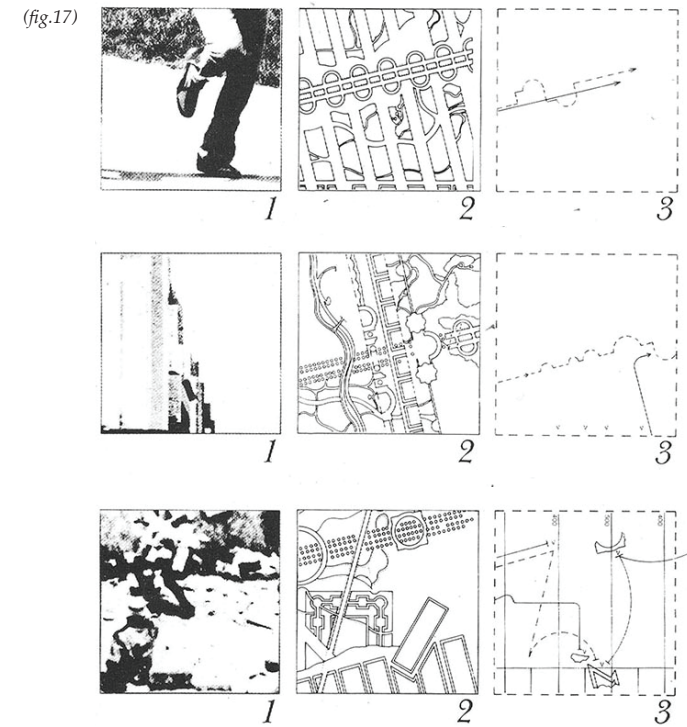
Drawing from Lynch, I approach a project by first analyzing a space from a bird's eye view—an objective vantage point where parts can be seen together as a whole. Shifting scales from macro to micro, the landscape can then be explored from a first-person perspective. Having an understanding of both vantage points magnifies and intensifies the perceptual experience of the city. The potency of these two vantage points, when used together, express a way of thinking that provides a complete way of understanding the functionality, maneuverability, and overall experience of space and place.

²² Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962), 33-58.

²³ Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch, and John Randolph Myer, *The View from the Road* (Cambridge, Mass: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1971), 18.

"The plan can be the device to organize activities and can, therefore, be viewed as the generator of form. Elevation and section are often considered to being more closely related to perception—encountering a space frontally."

—Roger Clarke *Precedents in Architecture*, 4

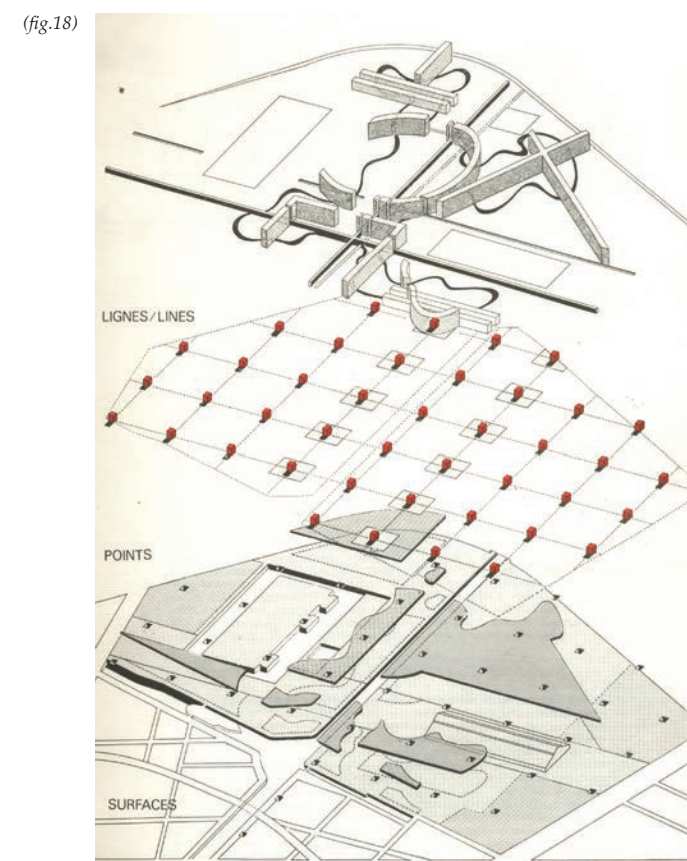


"Photographs direct the action, plans reveal the alternatively cruel and loving architectural manifestations, diagrams indicate the movements of the main protagonist. There, attitudes, plans, notations, movements are indissolubly linked. Only together do they define the architectural space of the park."

—Bernard Tschumi *Manhattan Transcripts*, 11

"Ultimately, the spatial relationships and physical dimensions of objects that change with each viewpoint are like movie shots from above that are inter cut with those from below."

—Bernard Tschumi *Manhattan Transcripts*, 12



Bernard Tschumi *Parc de la Villette*, 1987

Parc de la Villette is a park in Paris located at the north eastern edge of the city, previously occupied by a series of slaughter houses. The park includes a complex program of cultural and entertainment facilities.

Employing similar multi-perspective methodologies, architects use shifts in viewpoints to design and plan buildings. Using plan, elevation and axonometric drawings, an architect can gain a comprehensive understanding of a building and its function both internally, externally, and in context.

For example, in his *Manhattan Transcripts*,²⁴ Bernard Tschumi, a French-Swiss architect, developed a method for exploring the relationship between *space* and *use* by juxtaposing and layering plan views, movement diagrams and photographs (fig.17). He used a similar approach to designing and building the *Parc de la Villette* (fig.18).

The park was designed by superimposing three systems:

System of points: contains programmed activities

System of lines: directs movement through the park

*Series of planes: spaces to be appropriated by the public*²⁵

Tschumi's process shifted my thinking from traditional conventions of representation in architecture to more unconventional strategies and how they applied to graphic design. Through his drawings I started to question my interaction between spaces and myself and ultimately how we record and interpret those spaces and the already existing movements that happen within. Conversely, his system of points, lines and planes led me to think about constructing a framework that is simultaneously rigid and flexible and contains both constants and variables.

²⁴ Bernard Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts* (London: Academy Editions, 1995), 17.

²⁵ Bernard Tschumi and Frédéric Migayrou, *Bernard Tschumi: Architecture: Concept & Notation* (Paris: Editions Du Centre Pompidou, 2014), 108-113.

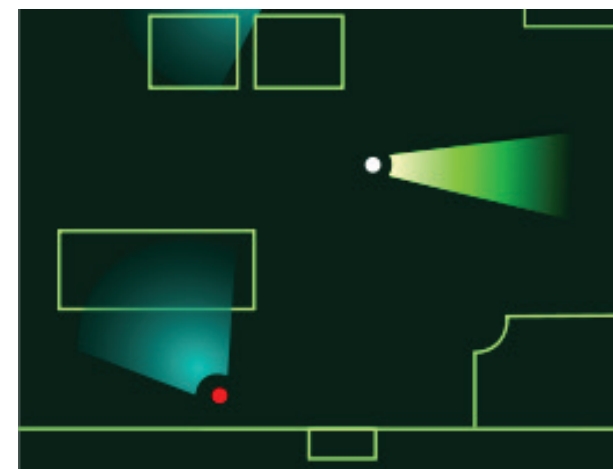
"Reality is summed up in an array of casual fragments, an endlessly alluring, poignantly reductive way of dealing with the world."

—Susan Sontag *On Photography*, 80

(fig.19)



(fig.20)



(fig.21)



precedents: video games

In more recent times, video games offer an interesting approach to multi-perspective experience through the lens of contemporary technology. In *Metal Gear Solid*²⁶ gamers are presented with multiple simultaneous viewpoints including first-person (fig.19), top-down third-person (fig.20), and oblique third-person (fig.21). The ability to alternate between different vantage points contributes significantly to the sense of immersion experienced by the player. This game requires skill and knowledge of when to shift between viewpoints. Without this function, the game world is nearly impossible for the player to navigate and complete the game. Where, older generation video games generally provided a single, dedicated point of view, the use of multiple perspectives in *Metal Gear Solid* was developed to ensure the player was offered the most useful angles of view, depending on the situation.

Analyzing the game play opened new ways of thinking about our engagement with contemporary technologies by blurring the boundaries between the real and the virtual world. *Metal Gear Solid* enables the player to simultaneously experience a real-time, top-down view that corresponds to the more immersive main view just as our mobile devices grant us the advantage of seeing ourselves at a different vantage point. Where "multiplicity of viewing angles creates different game styles within the same game,"²⁷ similarly Google Maps offers us different experiences in physical spaces and places that we navigate through in reality.

²⁶ Hideo Kojima *Metal Gear Solid* (Konami Computer Entertainment Japan, 1998.)

²⁷ Steven Poole, *Trigger Happy Videogames and the Entertainment Revolution* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2007), 80.

"The situationists maps described an urban navigational system that operated independently of Paris' dominant patterns."

—Simon Sadler *The Situationists*, 88

"With the aid of old maps, aerial photographs and experimental drifts, one can draw up hitherto lacking maps of influences."

—Guy Debord *The Situationists*, 84

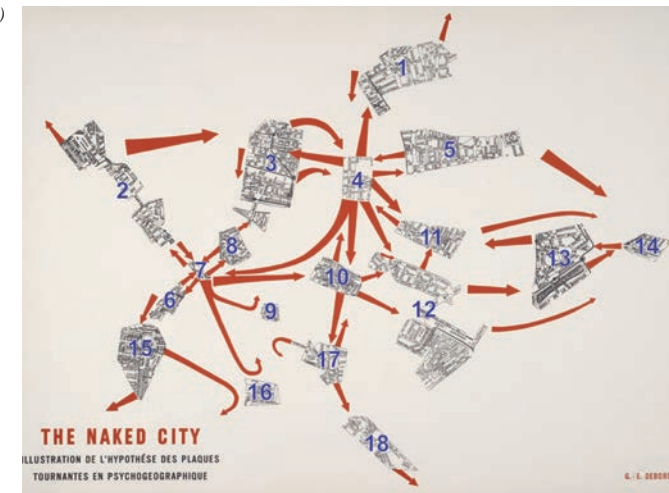
"From the derive point of view cities have psychogeographical relief, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes which strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones."

—Guy Debord *Theory of Derive*, 50-51

"Our first task is to enable people to stop identifying with their surroundings and with model patterns of behavior."

—Guy Debord *Theory of Derive*, 50-51

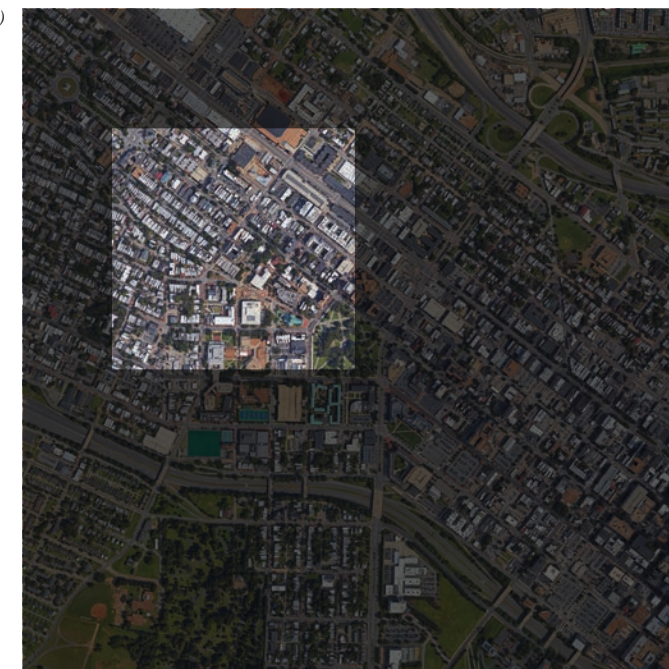
(fig.23)



Guy Debord & Asger Jorn *The Naked City Map*, 1957

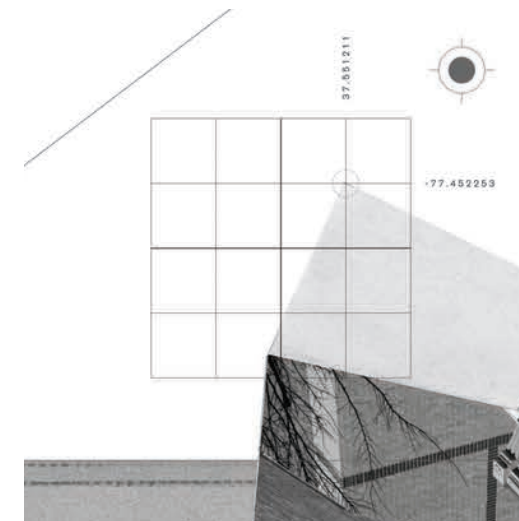
This map is derived from Guy Deboard psychogeographic studies, where he attempted to disrupt traditional ways of seeing and experiencing the city. The arrows represent specific ambiances, "pushes & pulls" in the city.

(fig.22)



In the preliminary stages of my thesis project, I defined a boundary that extended a quarter mile around VCU's Pollak Building (fig.22). This gave me a specific area to work within, a planned urban environment as a laboratory for investigation. My method involved superimposing a Cartesian grid over an aerial photograph of the city. The grid served as a tool dividing a two-dimensional plane into sixteen equal squares, similar to gridding a site in archeology. Within this grid I conceived of a number of "journeys," free flowing paths that would serve as narrative structures for my photographic study. This approach draws somewhat from the philosophy of French writer, Georges Perec: "Georges Perec's grid is the space within which the mathematical and the imaginary coexist in tension with one another, the grid is the story."²⁸ The journeys, planned with the use of the grid were designed to facilitate and experience the subjective nature of the dense assortment of pathways that Richmond offers. The grid is measured, calculated and rational. The paths were more open-ended, fluid, rhythmic and alive. The combination of the two created what Guy Debord considers "a focused meandering," a concept represented in his and Asger Jorn's *The Naked City* map (fig.23). This project allowed me to use the techniques of the situationist's *derivé* and mediated by mobile devices, a way of re-interpreting psychogeography. The joining of these factors encouraged notions of possibility and chance.

²⁸ Sarah Edwards and Jonathan Charley, *Writing the Modern City: Literature, Architecture, Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2012), 68.



The Pollak building is located at the center of the grid—0,0—a starting point for exploration. Representing my walking path between two Cartesian points on the grid—0,0 to 1,1—I developed a poster. These collages reveal the rhythmic undercurrent of the city, a representation seen from multiple viewpoints. The images of the buildings are shot from below and are positioned against satellite images shot from above. This project established a language and an aesthetic that led me to my exhibition work.



My thesis exhibition is a room within a room that has dimensions equal in length, width and height. The shape of the cube suggests an orderly, objective division of space and provides a fixed frame of reference. The outside shows raw common building materials including 2 x 4's notched together at specific points and attached to sheathing boards. The cube sits three and a half inches off the ground on a support system that matches the structure of the gridded walls, indicating a sense of separation from the gallery space. Two small rectangular windows offer a glimpse inside the structure.

Continuous horizontal lines wrap the entirety of the outside until the back right corner where an opening appears. The finished interior white walls contrasts with the unfinished exterior. The idea behind this closed space is to bring a sense of intimacy by distorting distance and scale, and to facilitate a sense of discovery by collapsing a half a mile radius of a city environment into the 8' cube. The tensions between rigid structure and the movement that takes place within inverts perception between the inside and outside, flipping viewers perspective.



The floor of the cube consists of an aerial image of a portion of the urban landscape in Richmond, defined in the early stage of the project and similar to what we see on Google maps. The floor image converges into the wall, abruptly transitioning into fragmented photographs of buildings shot from below that were collaged in sequential order simulating the walk. However, continuity is preserved between the floor and the wall by virtue of the similar tonal qualities of the images which emphasizes the synergistic relationship between the aerial and first-person views. Each wall represents a specific walk between two points, from the center of the map to one of four coordinate points that extend to the corners of the cube.



The wall graphics start in the lower left corner and rise to the top right, the viewer can enter at any point. Each of the images represent a specific marker on my path between two points and are composites of twelve to forty images. These collaged images are then overlapped in sequential order, signifying continuity and emphasizing a space as a sum of relationships between two points (process shown on next spread). The images reveal relationships and a sense of hierarchy of places through distortion of scale and the manipulation of aperture and shutter speed to express a sense of time and movement. These distortions create a tension, where various image fragments, close, separate, and stretch the depiction of the space, causing an effect of slowing down or speeding up movement in a way that parallels the actual experience of walking through a city.





Each collage group in the space includes a number of extruded planes, jutting out toward the viewer that break the two-dimensional flatness of the wall. A combination of satellite images and sequentially collaged photographs (reproduced on the next two spreads) show movement through specific places on the map directly corresponding to details within the spaces that arrested my attention and influenced my movements, direction and position. These particular locations guided my walk, similar to the notion of ambiances of the city outlined in psychogeography that push and pull the explorer. They are represented on the planes vertically, horizontally left, right, up and down that mirror my gestures of movement. I was inspired by El Lissitzky's *Prouns* where "upward thrusts become downward ones and stable vertical forms observed from an aerial perspective appear to move horizontally in space when the viewers perception changes."²⁹ The outside edge of the planes are painted red and relate to the red rectangle graphic shapes placed on the floor, indicating their location. The three-dimensional planes also express the idea of parallax, the process by which elements are revealed at various speeds as one moves forward. In this case, differing vantage points expand and contract as one moves through the closed space of the cube. The effect is a constant shift between first- and third-person vantage points, all in an interlocking web of movement forcing different arrangement of perspectives.

The typography was set in Akzidenz Grotesque, a utilitarian typeface intended for clear legibility and simplicity, and for its ability to maintain readability in fragmented pieces. The words integrated into the collages connote the notion of time ("will", "is") and points of view ("I", "you", "they"). The boundaries of the composite images act as a mechanism to transform and displace the typographic elements. As a result, unfamiliar combinations of texture and language emerge. The syntactic organization of words created a network of various rhythms and intensities. These variations in rhythm and movement further emphasize the notion of my moving body against the objects and ambiances of the city. As I started to apply the type, I noticed its ability to stretch the images, to connect points between the here and there. Like objects and signs in the city, the typography helped to open and close images of spaces, moving or stopping the eye across the composition.

²⁹ Victor Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1946* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 32.









evaluation

By exposing and absorbing the nuances of the everyday through parallax, multiple perspectives and fragmentation, this work points to a more flexible way of thinking, where form making can be used to alter communication and perception. Mobile GPS technology is continuing to change our relationship to urban environments and subsequently is changing the forms of representation used to express that relationship. This thesis work was an attempt to expose new ways to engage and view the environment we inhabit everyday and to understand the relationships between how cities move and how we move within them mediated by contemporary technology. The cube offers a new context, a place to critically think about ways of seeing, a way of generating heightened perceptions of the environment, a "space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange where the geographical imagination can be expanded to encompass a multiplicity of perspectives"³⁰ I look at this work as a solid base on which to build. Ultimately my goal is to create a more visceral and immersive experience for the viewer. In my opinion, the work at this point is formally attractive, but too balanced and unassertive. It lacks a more personal expression, a statement of interest in the content of these walks.

Moving forward, the work needs to better emphasize certain elements that sparked my interests along these paths, communicated through a hierarchy that is more bold and distinct. For example, adding collaged images of the inside of a dumpster or exaggerating the walking path of a sidewalk around a building. This can possibly be achieved through extreme shifts in scale, and the creation of higher density areas that reveal stronger temporal progressions. The work needs to contract and expand the viewer's sense of space and motion. It has to suck them in, make them stay in one place, envelop them and at other moments offer breathing room and a more detached, analytical distance. One concept that is absent in this work, is my previously stated interest in the idea of intersections. How does one element change, whether image or type, when it hits a second element? Does it switch? Reflect? Distort? Splinter?

³⁰ Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Malden: Blackwell, 2014), 64.

"The purpose of mapping isn't necessarily to recognize and sustain patterns or to recognize and depart from them. Rather the goal is to recognize unconscious constraints so that we can make conscious decisions."

—Peter Turchi *Maps of the Imagination*, 192

"Vision is not passive but active, in fact, a transaction between a person and their environment in which they both participate."

—Edward T. Hall *The Hidden Dimension*, 82

"To understand something is to understand it's topography, to know how it chart it."

—Walter Benjamin *One-Way Street*, 13



Over the past two years, I have investigated many processes, materials and ideas that have influenced my thinking and growth as a visual communicator. I have developed a framework that favors multiplicity and denies singularity, a platform that enables competing perspectives that oscillate between macro and micro viewpoints. I see this framework as ongoing, ever changing, a fluid structure that is adaptive and receptive. I believe by applying this mode of thinking to working with form and content, we are more equipped to generate more specific and authentic ways of communicating. Extending beyond the academic walls, looking at something through multiple-perspective lenses demands that we always consider the alternatives. Through a comprehensive awareness of the physical spaces and places we inhabit, I believe we can start to think about how we see, interpret and communicate in completely new ways. Through the multiplicities we are exposed to today, we are offered many different ways of approaching problems. My aim in this body of work and research ultimately points to continually asking new questions from different vantage points and looking closely how it can be applied and expanded in other areas of the professional and academic field of visual communication.

“Operating between two places, moreover, potentially constitutes the subject not merely as the one who ‘maps the tears and rifts, the places where things have come apart, and the overlaps and joins, the places where things come together but also as the one who can allow him/herself to be changed by new surroundings.”

—Nicolas Whybrow *Street Scenes: Brecht, Benjamin and Berlin*, 21

Appleyard, Donald, Kevin Lynch, and John Randolph. Myer. ***The View from the Road***. Cambridge, Mass: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1971.

The authors describe and classify variables of the city from a moving viewpoint: the road through a system of diagrams and notations.

Augé, Marc. ***Non-places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Super Modernity***. London: Verso, 2006.

A book outlining the concept of "non-places", which are areas too insignificant to be called a "place."

Bachelard, Gaston, Maria Jolas, Mark Z. Danielewski, and Richard Kearney. ***The Poetics of Space***. New York: Penguin Books, 2014.

This book offers insights into how are perceptions are molded by physical spaces with a focus on lived experience.

Bayer, Herbert. ***Herbert Bayer: Paintings, Architecture, Graphics***. Roswell, NM: Roswell Museum and Art Center, 1962.

This book documents Bayer's Diagram of the Field of Vision. His unconventional method of displaying work offered completely new ways of experiencing exhibition design from a multiplicity of angles.

Benjamin, Walter. ***Moscow Diary***. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986.

Found in his writing from his trip to Moscow, Benjamin offers an interesting perspective on what defines a "place" where one must enter it from all directions.

Benjamin, Walter. ***One-Way Street and Other Writings***. London: Penguin, 2009.

Benjamin records his observations of dense city life in Weimar, Germany. He emphasizes the importance of space, place and social interaction.

Berger, John. ***About Looking***. London: Writers and Readers, 1984.

A analysis of Susan Sontag's On Photography positioned against his own views of ways of seeing through a photographic lens and the reproduction of images.

Boettger, Till. ***Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools***. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2014.

This book analyzes spatial transitions, or thresholds. The primary focus of the text is based on experiential and perceptual moments that happen within these spaces.

Boldrick, Stacy. "Reviewing the aerial view." *Arq: Architectural Research Quarterly* 11, no. 01 (2007): 11. doi:10.1017/s1359135507000462. This article investigates the history and cultural impact of the aerial view. It offers a critical analysis of how "elevated" images alter perception and experience.

Callahan, Harry M., Dirk Luckow, and Sabine Schnakenberg. ***Harry Callahan: Retrospektive = Retrospective***. Heidelberg: Kehrer, 2013. This book catalogs a comprehensive collection of work spanning across most of his career. I was particularly interested in his work *Ever present: The Eleanor photographs* This collection demonstrated his method of working with multiple exposure techniques.

Calvino, Italo, William Weaver, and Peter Washington. ***If on a Winter's Night a Traveler***. London: David Campbell, 2000. In his experimental novel, Calvino writes about the reader (you) who is reading a book. The fragmented narration style oscillates between second-person and the third-person narration between each of its chapters.

sources: **primary**

Carter, Rob, Ben Day, Philip B. Meggs, Sandra Maxa, and Mark Sanders. ***Typographic Design: Form and Communication***. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2015.

Foundational manual for visual communicators. Of particular interest to me is the emphasis on typographic space.

Clark, Roger H., and Michael Pause. ***Precedents in Architecture***. Chapman & Hall, 1984.

This book provides an assessment of architectural methods and techniques. The introduction chapter clearly defines architectural terms such as "plan to section" and "circulation to use space" and "unit to whole."

Coates, Nigel. ***Narrative Architecture***. London: Wiley-Academy, 2012.

In this text, the author considers the experiential aspect of architecture. He weaves together architecture, design, narrative and the city through a variety of different examples ranging from ancient history to present day.

Corner, James M., and Alex S. MacLean. ***Taking Measures Across the American Landscape***. New Haven, CT.: Yale Univ. Pr., 2000.

A collection of American aerial landscape photographs and map drawings that approaches alternative ways of planning and taking future measures in the environment.

Cresswell, Tim. ***Place: An Introduction***. Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2015. Discusses the fundamental concept of place through everyday uses and theoretical applications in human geography.

Cullen, Gordon. ***The Concise Townscape***. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1971. Cullen coined the term "townscape" which is essentially examining the simultaneous nature of cities through buildings, streets and spaces in between as a whole rather than individual parts of a collection.

de Certeau, Michel. ***The Practice of Everyday Life***. Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press, 2008. In this book, de Certeau develops a theoretical framework for closely looking at the everyday person who exists in complex societies. In part 3, he examines spatial practices, specifically ways of walking and experiencing space.

Dibbets, Jan, Rudi Fuchs, and Marcel Vos. ***Jan Dibbets***. Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1987.

A collection of Dibbets' photographs spanning almost the entirety of his career. In his early work, he used techniques of rotating the camera to shift perspective.

Díaz, Junot. ***Drown***. London: Faber and Faber, 2008.

Díaz seamlessly weaves together his characters using a mix of first-, second- and third person perspectives.

Dorrian, Mark. ***Seeing from Above: The Aerial View in Visual Culture***. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013.

This book documents the history, development and impact of the aerial view in a series of separate essays spanning from Nadar's first aerial image to Google Earth.

Edwards, Sarah, and Jonathan Charley. ***Writing the Modern City: Literature, Architecture, Modernity***. London: Routledge, 2012.

This book explores the relationship between literature and architectural space. Specifically it connects Georges Perec's Species of Spaces and other pieces and drifting through a city landscape.

"The syntactic rules of visual language are constituted by the set of operations and functions through which perceptual mechanisms establish interrelations among the basic elements in diverse visual fields. Their application results in the conjunction of specific spatial totalities."

—Fernande Saint-Martin *Semiotics of Visual Language*, 65

Elkins, James.

The Poetics of Perspective. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996.

The author illustrates the history, theory and practice of perspective as a metaphorical model for vision and representation in images.

Robert Flick: Trajectories.

Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2004.

This book curates much of the photographers work. It focuses on landscapes and simultaneity of events that happen within city environments through techniques of layering, converging and sequencing.

Foucault, Michel, and Jay Miskowiec. *Of Other Spaces*. *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 22. doi:10.2307/464648.

Based on a lecture given by Foucault in 1967, this transcription analyzes the relationship between linear time and space within a framework of human perception.

Friedberg, Anne.

The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2009.

The author examines the relationship between the world, experienced in reality, and the world experienced through virtual screens—using a window as a metaphor for perception.

Gilloch, Graeme.

Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1997.

This book examines Benjamin's fascination with perception, the city environment and its form while relating it to modernity in the present day. The art of getting lost is connected to Debord's theory in the practice of *dérive*.

Hall, Edward T.

The Hidden Dimension. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith Publisher, 1992.

This book examines the use of space by people and the environments they construct.

Halprin, L. ***Cities***. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1972.

Halprin investigates the fundamental elements of the urban landscape: the open and closed spaces that give a city its unique identity.

Halprin, Lawrence.

Lawrence Halprin notebooks, 1959-1971. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1973.

This book presents a collection of handwritten notes and drawings. Particularly interesting is the idea of "motations": the fusion of notation and movement to describe space.

Hemingway, Ernest.

In Our Time. New York: Scribner, 2008.

This book a collection of short stories. It contains the story *On the Quai at Smyrna* that illustrates techniques of multiple perspectives throughout the narrative.

Holl, Steven.

Parallax. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

Holl looks at materiality, space and light through the notion of parallax: the change, difference or displacement of objects seen from an individual while moving.

Ingold, Tim.

Lines: A Brief History. London: Routledge, 2016.

This book dives into the notion of a line as a metaphor for moving and experiencing spaces and places through a variety of different lenses such as archeology and psychology.

Kandinsky, Wassily.

Point and Line to Plane. New York: Dover, 1979.

Kandinsky examines the basic elements of art and design through non-representational images in a style of "non-objective" painting with an emphasis on the relationship between these elements.

sources: **primary**

Knabb, Ken.

Situationist International Anthology. Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2007.

Knabbs translates the ideologies articulated by the situationists led by Guy Debord. My thesis draws specifically the notion of psychogeography and the techniques of *dérive*.

Kojima, Kojima.

Metal Gear Solid. Konami Computer Entertainment Japan, 1998.

In this stealth-action video game for the Playstation 1 console, the player attempts to navigate as Snake Solid through the game world with the help of multiple camera views in an attempt to complete the mission undetected.

Kojiro, Yuichiro, and Yukio Futagawa.

Forms in Japan. Honolulu: East-West Center, 1965.

This book contains a collection of photographs demonstrating the interaction of form of unity, force and change in and between specific objects represented through photographs.

Leach, Neil.

Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory. London: Routledge, 2010.

This book questions the way we think about architectural space, specifically dense urban environments, through the lens of philosophers and cultural theorists.

Light, Andrew, and Jonathan M. Smith

Philosophies of Place. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

This book curates much of the photographers work. His work focuses on landscapes and simultaneity of events that happen within city environments through techniques of layering, converging and sequencing.

Livingstone, Marco, and David Hockney.

David Hockney. London: Thames & Hudson, 2001.

This book curates and examines the life and practice of Hockney as an artist. Specifically it accounts for his use of multiple photographic collages.

Lynch, Kevin.

The Image of the City. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.

Lynch outlines forms and perception of cities through objective and subjective lenses using micro and macro techniques. His classification of nodes, landmarks, paths, edge and districts is critical to analyzing spaces and places as parts of a whole.

Margolin, Victor.

The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1946.

Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009.

My interest in this book was the chapter surveying El Lissitzky's *Prouns*. Specifically how he manipulated form in space to create multiple viewpoints.

Melia, Paul.

David Hockney. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995.

This book curates and examines the life and practice of Hockney as an artist. This book goes further into detail about his use of multiple photographic collages and the interaction between space, time and movement.

Metzker, Ray K., William A. Ewing, and Nathalie Herschdorfer.

Ray K. Metzker Light Lines. Göttingen: Steidl, 2008.

This book shows a collection of the photographer's work and more importantly highlights his techniques of photo montage, multiple printing of negatives and unique perspectives captured primarily from the urban streets.

Moholy-Nagy, László.

Vision in Motion. Chicago: Paul Theobald and Company, 1969.

With aesthetics shaped by dadaism, constructivism and suprematism, he presents a collection of work and theories that connect art, science and technology of his day. Specifically his darkroom photography techniques have influenced my thinking.

Panofsky, Erwin.

Perspective as Symbolic Form. New York: Zone, 2002.

This book articulates spatial systems through psychological and physical social forces aligned with an individual's unique perception of spaces and places.

Perec, Georges, Simon Morris, and John Sturrock.

Species of Spaces and Other Pieces. Acklam: Information As Material, 2012.

Through a philosophical approach, this book examines the way we occupy space. I am specifically interested at how he looks at space at different scales.

Poole, Steven.

Trigger Happy Videogames and the Entertainment Revolution. New York: Arcade, 2007.

This book studies the aesthetics of video games. It cross-examines video games with other art forms, exposing the similarities and differences. Especially useful was the section on articulating a sense of space and different point of view techniques.

Sadler, Simon.

The Situationist City. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2001.

This book illustrates a more intensive and comprehensive approach to exploring the foundation of the Situationist International group. It provides clarity on some of the complex theories originally conceived by Debord.

Saint-Martin, Fernande.

Semiotics of Visual Language. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990

In this book, Saint-Martin examines visual language as a form of representation and communication. The chapter on perspective gave critical insight into our perception from different vantage points.

Soja, Edward W.

Thirdspace: Expanding the Geographical Imagination. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996.

This book studies different ways of interpreting environments through the lens of the spatial turn: a movement that puts space and place at the center of the humanities.

Silva, A. De Souza E. "From Cyber to Hybrid: Mobile Technologies as Interfaces of Hybrid Spaces." *Space and Culture* 9, no. 3 (2006): 261-78. doi:10.1177/1206331206289022.

The author coins the term "hybrid space"—simultaneously experiencing physical and digital spaces. This experience extends our vision beyond what is directly perceived.

Sontag, Susan.

On Photography. Penguin Books, 1973.

Her book addresses photography and its forms of representation. This book became critical to my thinking about the photograph as an object and how it is framed in different contexts.

Sullivan, Constance, and John Szarkowski.

Jan Groover: Photographs. Boston: Bulfinch, 1993.

This book is a collection of Groover's photographs showing her transition of triptychs shot from a stationary vantage point to her moving with the camera.

Szarkowski, John.

The Photographer's Eye. S.I.: S.n., 1970.

This book includes an introduction to visual language in photography. It outlines ways of thinking about subject and context with an emphasis on time, the thing itself, the detail, the frame and vantage point.

Talbot, Richard. "Speculations on the Origins of Linear Perspective." *Nexus Network Journal* 5, no. 1 (2003): 64-98. doi:10.1007/s00004-002-0005-5.

In this paper, the author questions the history and origins of linear perspective and specifically its use in Renaissance painting. He examines geometry, proportion and perspective through lenses of architecture and mathematics to question notions of perception.

sources: **primary**

Tschumi, Bernard, and Frédéric Migayrou.

Bernard Tschumi: Architecture: Concept & Notation. Paris: Editions Du Centre Pompidou, 2014.

This book is a comprehensive collection of designs and concepts conceived by Tschumi. Of particular interest is his system of points, lines and planes in *The Parc de la Villette*.

Tschumi, Bernard.

Manhattan Transcripts. London: Academy Editions, 1995.

This book is a collection of architectural drawings and writings based on a theoretical approach to analyzing space and its use by examining sequences, movement and functionality.

Tuan, Yi-fu.

Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2014.

Tuan examines the way humans construct reality. Beyond differentiating the terms space and place, he offers interesting look at spatio-temporal experiences.

Tufte, Edward Rolf.

Envisioning Information. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press, 1990.

This book is a comprehensive collection of diagrams, charts and maps that transform complex (often three-dimensional) information in two-dimensional plane using fundamental techniques that increase efficiency, coherency and legibility.

Turchi, Peter.

Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer. San Antonio, TX: Trinity UP, 2007.

Turchi uses a map as a metaphor, comparing the way a writer constructs a story and how the cartographer visually charts the world. He demonstrates the power of maps by what they include, exclude and translating three-dimensions onto a two-dimensional plane.

Whybrow, Nicolas, and Diane Heath.

Street Scenes: Brecht, Benjamin and Berlin. Bristol: Intellect Books, 2005.

This book cross-examines Brecht's theory of an "epic theatre" against Benjamin's practice of the flaneur within the streets of Berlin. Particularly interesting was how these two ideas merged in the context of architecture and theories of everyday life.

Willats, Stephen.

Stephen Willats: Between Buildings and People. London: Academy, 1996.

Stephen Willats is a visual artist concerned with social life in dense living areas, such as an apartment building. Place incorporates the past, present and future of its tenants and their interrelationships based on behavioral experiences and the objects that define them.

Woods, Alan, Ralph Rumney, and Alan Ward.

The Map Is Not the Territory. Manchester; New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Based on a series of interviews between Ralph Rumney and Alan Woods, this book further supports psychogeography, the theory and practice of drifting through cities. Rumney's approach to map making, as seen in his work, is a direct reflection of his experiences in urban environments.

"The city is a discourse that is truly a language: the city speaks to its inhabitants, we speak our city, the city where we found ourselves, simply by inhabiting it, moving around it, looking at it."

"Typographic space is the rhythmic and dimensional field in which typographic communication exists."

—Rob Carter *Form and Communication*, 54

"The problem with a window on the world is that there must be a wall around the window, and this wall is cutting us off from what is seen. You can't actually walk towards it."

—Marco Livingstone *David Hockney*, 109

Banerjee, Tridib. *City Sense and City Design: Writings and Projects of Kevin Lynch*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2002.

Bertin, Jacques. *Semiology of Graphics: Diagrams, Networks, Maps*. Redlands, CA: ESRI, 2011.

Bodenhamer, David J., John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris. *Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives*. Bloomington: IN, 2015.

Brogan, Jacqueline Vaught. "Hemingway's In Our Time: A Cubist Anatomy." *The Hemingway Review* 17.2 (Spring 1998): 31-46.

Cosgrove, Denis. *Geography and Vision: Seeing, Imagining and Representing the World*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2012.

Doherty, Claire. *Situation*. London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2009.

Downs, Roger M., and David Stea. *Maps in Minds: Reflections on Cognitive Mapping*. New York: Harper & Row, 1977.

Frank, Robert. *Robert Frank: Story Lines*. London: Tate Publishing, 2004.

Frank, Robert, Ute Eskildsen, Christoph Ribbat, Wolfgang Beilenhoff, and Martin Jaeggi. *Robert Frank: Hold Still, Keep Going*. Essen, Germany: Steidl, 2016.

Gandelsonas, Mario. *The Urban Text*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.

Golding, John. *Cubism: A History and an Analysis*. London: Faber and Faber, 1968.

Hemment, Drew. "Locative Arts." *Leonardo* 39, no. 4 (2006): 348-55. doi:10.1162/leon.2006.39.4.348.

Hoete, Anthony. *Reader on the Aesthetics of Mobility*. London: Black Dog, 2003.

Jamieson, Harry. *Visual Communication: More than Meets the Eye*. Bristol: Intellect, 2007.

Jeker, Werner, and Jianping He. *Werner Jeker*. Singapore: Page One, 2006.

Junge, Barbara. *The Digital Turn: Design in the Era of Interactive Technologies*. Zürich: Park Books, 2012.

Kepes, Gyorgy, S. Giedion, and S. I. Hayakawa. *Language of Vision*. Whitefish, MT: Literary Licensing, 2014.

Kunz, Wili. *Macro- Microaesthetics*. Teufen: Verlag Arthur Niggli AG, 1998.

Levin, David Michael. *Opening of Vision: Nihilism and the Postmodern*

Doherty, Claire. *Situation*. London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2009.

sources: **secondary**

Malevich, Kazimir Severinovich. *The Non-objective World*. Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1959.

Möntmann, Nina. *Mapping a city*. Hamburg: Kunstverein, 2004.

Müller-Brockmann, Josef. *Grid Systems in Graphic Design: A Visual Communication Manual for Graphic Designers, Typographers and Three Dimensional Designers*. Zürich: Niggli, 2015.

Obrist, Hans-Ulrich, Tom McCarthy, and Andrew Brown. *Mapping It Out: An Alternative Atlas of Contemporary Cartographies*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2014.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. Chichester: Wiley, 2005. Print.

Porter, Tom. *The Architect's Eye: Visualization and Depiction of Space in Architecture*. London: Spon, 1997.

Presner, Todd Samuel, David Shepard, and Yoh Kawano. *HyperCities: Thick Mapping in the Digital Humanities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.

Rouse, Richard. "What's your perspective?" *ACM SIGGRAPH Computer Graphics* 33, no. 3 (1999): 9-12 doi:10.1145/330572.330575.

Scoates, Christopher, and Roy Ascott. *Brian Eno: Visual Music*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2013.

Sheringham, Michael. *Everyday Life: Theories and Practices from Surrealism to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.

Steyerl, Hito. *The Wretched of the Screen*. Berlin: Sternberg P., 2012.

Thrower, Norman Joseph William. *Maps & Man: An Examination of Cartography in Relation to Culture and Civilization*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972.

Weingart, Wolfgang. *Typography: My Way to Typography*. Baden, Switzerland: Lars Muller, 2000.

Williamson, Jack H. "The Grid: History, Use, and Meaning." *Design Issues* 3, no. 2 (1986): 15. doi:10.2307/1511481.

Wood, Denis, John Fels, and John Krygier. *Rethinking the Power of Maps*. New York: Guilford, 2010.





thank you

Roy
Camden
David

Laura
Jamie
Matt

John
Sandy
Ern

Joel
Paul

Anika
Cassandra
Francisco
Sirah
Weijian