2009

Hotel + Urban Community Interwoven

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Virginia Commonwealth University

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I like to thank God for my journey!

There are so many people that I would like to thank for their prayers, support and for the vital roles they play in my life. Without them it would have been a difficult and lonely path to take. You have truly contributed to the cliche’ “it takes a village to raise a child.”

Special Thanks to my mom and husband for begin the first to understand my desire to go after my dreams.

To my husband Frederick & children Alexus, Alvonte and Aaron for understanding teamwork; what an awesome team!
To my parents, sisters, brother; all my extended family and friends. Thank you!

In closing I would like to dedicate my thesis project to all of my family and friends for their love and support.

In loving memory of my grandparents: Mollie and James A. Jones II. Thank you for setting the foundation and the legacy you left!

Over the years, interests have developed concerning the sustainability of our local communities. Infusion is a gallery hotel that seeks to promote and encourage interaction between the local people of the community and guests traveling from all parts of the world.

The innovative ideas and designs have been adopted to support the dynamic changes of integration among the people of Richmond, Virginia and other local communities. The style of hotel is my idea of connecting people socially, physically, and mentally through a vision of beauty and functionality.

More than just a hotel for rest and relaxation, Infusion will display a public gallery making art the universal language for their guests and the locals.
Grassroots of Design

As I look back over my life I realize how I got to a place where art and design have become so important to me? Design is about people, family and community.

As a designer, I believe I must put myself in other’s shoes; doing unto others as I would have them do unto me. A designer should always consider how their work will affect the people and the community it serves. Design must address a person’s health: physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Self-gratification for the designer is secondary, however, as designers we must search our values and our personal experience for what sets us apart as an individual. This trademark should aid in the overall design instead of hindering it.

Having a background in Fine Arts has contributed to my belief in the way a space should be designed. Design should be about creativity, shapes, color and their placement should relay a message. Every space should be adorned with color, creating harmony and unity within the design. Whether used on a grand scale or used in a minute detail, the use of color is imperative; people respond to color. Color is an element that can be multifunctional; it creates emotional and physical feelings, dictating direction and giving information.

Along with color, shapes are equally important in design. I am engrossed with circles and their mystery. The shape of a circle offers a mystical entity representing infinity, life and perpetual movement, characteristics found in people, family and community! Design penetrates much deeper than a surface.
Case Study 1

Designer: Christian Liaigre
Project Type: Adaptive Reuse
Location: Manhattan, New York
The Mercer Hotel

The Mercer Hotel, a luxury boutique hotel located in the urban Manhattan’s SoHo District, urban setting. An 1890’s Romanesque Revival style warehouse this adaptive reuse hotel offers an urban loft experience for guests. Bridging a gap between a home and hotel, the designer wanted to create a space that was sophisticated, trendy while keeping the existing character and history of the building.

- 75 key (number of rooms)
- 9 floors
- plenty of natural light
- modern interior
- various type rooms
- living room type lobby
  used as a communal space
- 24 hour food and bar service

image courtesy of google maps

image courtesy www.hotelsoftherichandfamous.com

image courtesy www.smh.com.au
The merging of two styles is evident in The Mercer hotel, with contemporary style interior and the Romanesque Revival style exterior, this hotel shows continuity between the two.
Case Study 2
The National Dance Center is located in a small town called Pantin northeast of Paris. The idea of this project was to take an old building headed for demolition, and give it new life. Although faced with many structural problems the building was ideal for the program. Made of concrete the structure has squares and rectilinear shapes that become voids.

- 11 dance studios
- library
- classrooms
- exhibition area
- conferences rooms
- cinema
- cafeteria
- offices
- central atrium
The architects goal was to keep much of the concrete exposed.

Program centers on a long 85 foot entry hall. The hall stretches up to the sixth floor, massive concrete stair and ramp that lead to the top. Infused with color and light helps to define the different levels.

“These lights turn on when everyone has left the building, and they have become a sign of the absence of people and the presence of the building itself.”

Architecture Week
### Case Study 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designer</th>
<th>Brennan Beer Gorman Architects/ Yabu Pushelberg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project/ Type</td>
<td>Adaptive Reuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Times Square, New York</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
W Hotel Times Square

W Hotel, a branded boutique hotel under one chain. Each hotel caters to its environmental setting and personal sense of style. The guest enjoys a unique and different experience.

- 53 floors
- 509 guest rooms

‘W’ stands for Warmth, Witty, Wonderful and Welcoming

Starwood hotels

W Hotel displays how a hotel can become a relaxing retreat from the busy urban streets.

Diagram of the Lobby
“When we build, let us think that we build for ever.”

John Ruskin
Case Study 1

Designer           James Polshek Architects
Project/ Type   Expansion
Location            Manhattan, New York
Building physically separated from university main campus by Amsterdam Avenue; a major thoroughfare, linked by a vacant elevated plaza.

Polshek’s challenge was to revitalize the school’s identity, integrating the building back to the campus, by reinvented circulation paths and creating an addition the existing building now enters into dialogue with the new addition instead of conflicting with it.
Plan View: Expansion to Jerome L. Greene Hall

Entrances / path of travel at ground level

Entrances / path of travel at elevated level

Floor plans of the ground and elevated level
**Case Study 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designer</th>
<th>Brad Cloepfil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project/ Type</td>
<td>Adaptive Reuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Portland, Oregon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Built in 1914 situated in an industrial area this historic warehouse is situated in Portland’s Pearl District; the center for this city’s art community. The concept of this adaptive reuse project went from a old cold storage to a space that serve the functions of an advertising agency.

"The architecture addresses the collective and individual functions of the workplace through a diversity of spatial experiences and sensitive response to program and context."

Allied Works
Different levels of the Weiden and Kennedy Building. With a central void allows light to flow throughout the building.

Representational models of the building.

Interior views showing the center void of the Weiden and Kennedy Building. An important element added to the building.
Case Study 3

Designer           Rafael Vinoly Architects
Project/ Type    Expansion / New Construction
Location          Brooklyn, New York
The Brooklyn Children’s Museum located in the urban context of New York Crown Heights a residential and ethnically diverse community. The 56,005 sq. ft. expansion purpose was to improve circulation/space and become inviting to children. Two stories of new construction connect to existing structure providing improved circulation paths. The circulation allowed access to the museum existing rooftop terrace and outdoor theater.
The Brooklyn Children Museum demands a presence in the community. Bright yellow tile roof and L-shape allows the building to stand out within its urban community. Located near Brower Park and a school, this museum project is ideal for the site, connecting building with the community.
“All architecture is great architecture after sunset; perhaps architecture is really a nocturnal art, like the art of fireworks.”

Gilbert Keith Chesterton
Site characteristics inspire and aid in determining what will be built. Tadao believes that architecture should have its own universe, strength and force of the individual site, the land’s topographic energy suggest placement addressing other buildings, walkways and how people move.

Tadao always has an image in mind before he begins. Using his head as a tool a place to walk around, he comes up with his first image of the space... first image is always important. A circle or triangle can serve as basic idea for a space and the site.

He then relates a specific symbol to a structure that comes from an intellectual and philosophical dream. Never losing the first images which are simple and important sketches along with the spirit-energy of the building. Specific ideas are then developed more, at which point other tools can be incorporated, like models, computer etc., while continuing to develop ideas.

First image was to build a castle on a hill, on an island that was accessible to people; especially children.
“One can say that the architecture is a process that elaborates itself in a fight of which the finished structure is only the result. The architecture is therefore a fight art. The work work-site is nothing other than the field of this fight, and more the quality of the fight student, more the finished architecture proves itself strong. From the standpoint architectural, the most beautiful moment is situated during the realization. During the works, the architecture presents a face overflowing of this aggressive energy that conceals in a latent way a place where, of an instant to the other, life prepares itself to gush.” Tadao Ando
A compulsive sketcher and always on the cutting edge of technology but not allowing it to ever go beyond what is appropriate for the project. “Technology is part of civilization and being anti-technology would be like declaring war on architecture and civilization itself.” Trained in electronics in a turf covered hangar, a camouflage technique used while working in The Royal Air Force. Sir Norman Foster adapted the technique in his own designs.

He believes design is a continuum from the largest to the smallest detail. The smallest details are priority.

Sir Norman Foster: believes that the best architecture comes from a synthesis of all the elements that separately comprise a building: the structure that holds it up; the services that allow it to work; the ecology of the building — whether it is naturally ventilated, whether you can open the windows, the quality of light; the materials used, their mass or their lightness; the character of the spaces; the symbolism of the form; the relationship of the building to the skyline or the streetscape; and the way in which the building signals its presence in the city countryside. I think that holds true whether you are creating a landmark of deferring to a historic setting. Successful architecture all of these things and more.”

In designing this building, the aim was to create extensive unified areas and thus achieve transparency and maximum flexibility. For this reason, nearly all the vertical structural elements, as well as the circulation and service shafts, are arranged on the building’s external skins. The cores are located in the east and west facades. Vertical movement is provided by a combination of express lifts, with central escalators for local circulation. The form of the building reflects the circulation density, which decreases towards the top.”
Research of Foster’s process is very informative and strategic.

Loose sketches of every detail can later be translated as other forms of communication during the design process, sketches that are informative when you leave a site.

Elements used in Norman Foster design projects:
- Integration
- Regeneration
- Adaptability
- Flexibility
- Communication
- Economy
- Ecology
Why can't we have those curves and arches that express feeling in design? What is wrong with them? Why has everything got to be vertical, straight, unbending, only at right angles - and functional?

Charles, Prince of Wales
Eric Owen Moss

“Jeweler of joinery”

Eric Owen Moss love for geometry and instinct form began in one of his project known as Nara and the Western House. For him it was a series of governing geometry that he pulled together, infecting one another.

“As you’re resolving things, you’re unravelling things.”

“The material question—what’s used and why—is about an aesthetic predilection. And predilection is weakness. It’s derived, doesn’t belong to me. So I’m trying to unlearn it. The selection of materials has become easy which means it’s not a choice anymore.”

Eric Owen Moss

3535 Hayden Tract

The New City located in Culver City, California
- Consists of three sites and a variety of sections
- The site includes: 43 buildings
- Hayden Tract at Hayden Ave.
- National Blvd.
- East & South intersection at Washington and Ince Blvd.

Owned by private developers and public agencies in a effort to revitalize the Industrial area.
In his models, Owen uses materials that represent the exact material he plans to use in the structure. Moss uses a variety of methods in order to present his work, observing the layering of his images, I find this to be very effective technique; placing photographic images as a way of showing volume, while a wire frame placed over top of the photo shows a void of space.
Letter to Architect Ballou & Justice

"Site Plan for campus RPI (Richmond Professional Institute) concept was that all buildings of Franklin Street would be low structures not exceeding five stories. Almost all would contain courtyards supported on columns up to the second floor level so that the pleasant vistas and open areas for movement would be scattered throughout the campus crossings of heavily travelled streets would be accomplished by overhead bridges so as to eliminate conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular traffic." Virginia Commonwealth University, 1973
Built in 1967, The Theresa Pollak Building formerly known as "The Art Classroom Building" is located at 325 N. Harrison Street Richmond, Virginia on the campus of Virginia Commonwealth University, situated in a urban setting. The Pollak building also sits adjacent to a residential community, and juxtaposed to the building sits on cantilever support columns, with an void that makes up the atrium/courtyard area.
Concrete Structure:
Approximate Sq. Footage: 96,867
Usable: 83,431
Each floor: 24,000
Structure Study

Sketch of the Pollak Building inner courtyard area if it was unfolded

Southeast of building looking towards Harrison Street

Observation sketch of column placement

Study of the building and site issues:
- courtyard under utilized
- site itself is very hard, cold and uninviting
- poor circulation paths
- disconnection from the community
Pedestrian traffic of people accessing the building

- Heavy Traffic
- Medium Traffic
- Light Traffic
- Very Light Traffic

Pedestrian traffic of people traveling thru

- Paths of travel from entrances
to nearest stairway (Light traffic)
- Paths of travel from entrances
to opposite stairway (Medium traffic)
- Paths of travel from entrances
directly to elevators (Heavy traffic)

Pedestrian traffic of paths to other levels

- As-Built Model
- Parti
- Structure
- Symmetry
- Massing
A hotel that makes a social statement shows vitality to the community!

The goal of this thesis is to develop an appreciation and understanding of hotels and public spaces. Time has shown that hotels are isolated businesses that many times close itself off to the community. Design of this hotel will create successful communal space for the guest and the local residents. Taking an adaptive reuse of a building; changing it to a high end gallery hotel that will encourage interaction between the local community residents and guest traveling to Richmond, Virginia. The Pollak building will display innovative design and ideas that address the use of color, circulation paths and curved walls.
The project consists of an adaptive reuse of the Pollak Building into a high end gallery hotel called Infusion. Saturated colors and curved walls are elements carried throughout. The Infusion hotel was developed to promote interaction between locals and guest.
### Space Requirements / Assumptions

**Hotel area program and percentages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guest room</th>
<th>Approx. Sq. Ft</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Approx. Sq. Ft. Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Overall Hotel %</th>
<th>Floor Location</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
<td>Food and beverage outlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double/double</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,536</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,360</td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Floor Location**

- 3, 4, 5
- Food and beverage outlet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lobby</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>3</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>1,636</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,636</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating</td>
<td>210</td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage Outlet</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support (bellman, luggage, bathrooms)</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11,216</td>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Function Areas**

| Lounge/ Club        | 2,000          |          | 2,000                | 39%        |                  |                |                |
| Restaurant          | 1,600          |          | 1,600                |            |                 |                |                |
| Library Lounge      | 1,000          |          | 1,000                |            |                 |                |                |
| **Total**           |                |          | 19,600               |            | 39%             |                |                |

### Code Overlay

- Occupancy Type: Assembly R-1
- Maximum Occupancy: 350
- Egress: 6 exits
- Main Entrance: 2, include ADA compliant ramp
- Rear Entrance: 2, include ADA compliant ramp
- Elevators: 2
- Rooms: 2, ADA accessible

**Note:** Everything located inside box is the area of focus
Schematic Design

Legend
- Immediate adjacency
- Close & convenient
- Convenient
- Minor relationship
- Acoustic / privacy
- Natural light
- Entrance

Relationship Diagrams

Floor Level 1

Floor Level 2

Legend
- Vertical
- Horizontal Primary
- Horizontal Secondary

Spatial Task Levels

Circulation

Legend
- Entrance
- Corridor
- Library
- Lobby
- Courtyard/ Entrance
- Guest Rooms / Exhibition
- Main Gallery / Guest Rooms
- Guest Rooms / Exhibition
- Guest Rooms / Library
- Library / Lounge / Admin
- Lounge / Restaurant
- Front

Relationship Diagrams
Concept Development

Bubble diagrams

Legend
- H: high
- M: medium
- L: low
- Y: yes
- N: no
- I: important but not required
- Note: Adjacency column
- 1: major adjacency column
- 2: major adjacency importance

Note:
- Adjacency column
- Major adjacency column
- Major adjacency importance

2nd floor

Lobby area

Guest rooms
The concept idea is connection between a hotel and community. Creating small community hubs within the hotel acts as communal spaces for individual and groups; encouraging interaction.

Elements within this hotel are squares and curves; square symbolizing strong and sturdiness of the building while the curves symbolize a flowing, evolving movement of the community.

Concept: Community
- movement/stagnant
- light
- circulation
- positive/ negative
- open/ closed

New circulation paths added across the atrium
Design Realization
The building structure consists of two elements that are noticeably the same throughout; all five levels mimic the next with support columns protruding through each floor. My design idea was to offer a space that would provide a different experience on each level and use the support column as a design element in relation to its structural intent.

The Sculptural catwalk on each level serves as an art piece and new circulation paths across the atrium.
Located on the 5th floor the main lounge takes advantage of the urban cityscape and skyline. The curved wall and floor pattern suggest movement.

Infusion is a hotel that welcomes the community by opening up public spaces; meeting rooms, community hubs, library lounge and art galleries.
The library lounge is a place where individuals can relax to read a book or meet other guests.


Andrew Blum. “The Elementalist.” Metropolis 2007: pg. 100-105


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