Make Hit Phlegm

James Dankovich

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture

Susan C. Piedmont-Palladino (Chair)
Paul F. Emmons
Marcia Feuerstein

9/30/09
Alexandria, VA

Keywords: Architecture, Surrealism, Chance

Copyright James Dankovich
A series of four Cubomanias were developed using the facades of prominent buildings in Falls Church, collected in the study in Chapter 1. The scaled facade of each building was cut into squares with identical dimensions, then selected randomly to be reassembled into a new interpretation of Falls Church.

In a traditional Cubomania, a photograph would be cut into equal size squares and rearranged without regard to the original image.
Cubomanias

The four Cubomanias developed with the Falls Church Facades were used as inspiration for the building's elevations. Each of these Cubomanias correspond to a side of the site.

Front Cubomania

Front Pencil Study

Front Computer Study
Pencil Studies

The Cubomanias were then sketched over in an effort to make sense of the drawing into a constructible concept. This is when a double wall construction was envisioned composed of an interior wall, vertical elements, windows and a screen wall.
The sketches of the elevations were drawn in the computer over the original Cubomanias and assigned colors to differentiate the four conditions shown in the sketches; the screen in light grey, the verticals in white, the envelope in medium grey, and the windows in dark grey.
The First Cubomania Model

This model was a concept of how to integrate the standard stoppages with the Cubomania. This concept was ultimately unused, as a stoppage was made specifically for the envelope wall and the floor plates were left mostly open.

The front of the model has a two walled facade based on the Cubomania sketches.
The Second Cubomania Model

This model was made with printed out computer sketches of the elevations. It also shows an early structural concept of using all the verticals from the Cubomania sketches as building structure. The final model only uses the largest verticals as building structure and smaller verticals as structure for the screen wall.

The interior wall is shown following the curve of a stoppage with the exterior wall flat against the property line.
The Structural Model

This model was made when exploring options for the building's structure. The main columns are not located in a grid pattern. They are connected by beams to the nearest large column on the opposite side. The final structure is similar, with joists between the main girders and the main columns on the property line supporting the screen wall as well.
Dreams were considered a valid inspiration for surreal work. Andre Brenton stated (Brenton, 1972. P. 11):

"I have always been amazed at the way an ordinary observer lends so much more credence and attaches so much more importance to waking events than to those occurring in dreams."

Each night that I dreamt a building or buildings I would record them into a Dream Diary. Particularly vivid dreams were then reinterpreted into dream collages.

This was recorded on the night of my first thesis midterm. It is also the first attempt at a dream collage. This is called the Russian Building, as it was referred to by a longtime friend whom resided there.
The Sinking Building

My Fiancée and I discovered this museum sinking into a swamp outside New Orleans. She taught High School there for four years. I have never been to Louisiana.
During my time as a volunteer for City Visions, a program teaching Washington, D.C. middle school students about architecture and urban design, I lead a building tour through this lobby.
This dream took place at a distorted version of the dormitory I lived in my freshman year at the University at Buffalo. A friend from high school (who also attended UB) broke thought the atrium in a rocket ship in order to rescue me. I'm not sure what he was rescuing me from or what it says about how I feel about my time at UB, but it is what it is.