THE SPACE OF THE IN-BETWEEN

This is a place where two worlds overlap. Where an element is not just an end but a beginning...

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ABSTRACT
The site is located across the P St. Bridge, before one enters DuPont Circle. This is an ideal site for investigating the space of the in-between. The site is situated between the small scale fabric of Georgetown and the monumental scale of D.C. This site is also situated between nature (Rock Creek Park) and the urban realm. This place must function as a significant portal into and out of the city. This concept of space precedes program, through an intense investigation of the site. Creating relationships and responding to the site, a sense of place is developed by becoming a player in its local context. Through this process, two architectonic elements arise: the wall and the tower. The wall functions like a vessel holding in the city, as well as, a fortress protecting the city. The tower acts as a beacon of light or node appearing above the canopy. The program is then introduced and informed by these spatial concepts. An intense intertwining and rediscovery of space, structure, and program occurs through this process.
Look at the spaces and relationships that the building creates with others. In process (the architect) will gradually formulate strong convictions about outdoor space. The beauty of space between the buildings—and if he does, he will carry his convictions onto his most important challenge—how to build cities.  

—Eero Saarinen
INTENTIONS / CONDITIONS

Upon entering the city one encounters a wall. This element stretches out towards the street, claiming the block. This creates a compression of space, emphasizing a portal into the city. This wall is three stories tall, which relates to the scale of Georgetown. Directly across from this wall is Rock Creek Park. Along this main wall is a large apertures that brings in a view of the park. There is a filtering of light and views within this wall. This in-between of light is a place for light to move through and reflect. This space of the wall is further opened to allow for the main circulation and create spaces for exhibition. This gives one the ability to view the art from the outside as well. Next, one encounters the tower. This element is of a monumental scale and has a strong relationship to DC. It creates an intensification of the urban edge, which does not conflict with nature, but recognizes its boundary. There is a secondary corridor and outdoor balcony along this outer edge. The spaces of the studios extend and overlap into this zone. This in-between space contains a series of horizontal louvers, which shield the glass facade from the harsh west sun. The walkways are made of a perforated metal, which also allows for air circulation and act as a brise sole. The entry element commands the main plaza, which continues across the street. The plaza is located on the north side of the building, giving it shade. One encounters a slot of space overhead, while entering the building. At the beginning of the summer solstice, a shaft of light comes through and shines down onto the plaza steps. This yearly ritual of light intensifies a sense of place and demonstrates its temporal nature.
One should begin with an idea about space, as a place of experience, and that this spatial concept then gives direction and meaning to the development of program and construction.

-Louis Kahn
LIVING MUSEUM

This building houses an art school and art gallery. The program has a didactic role to instruct and provide a place for contemplation. It becomes more than a place for consumption and collection. Many healthy relationships occur through this natural connection of an art school and art gallery. There is a cross-pollination of local talent. Students can learn directly from the original work of art. Art can be obtained for a reasonable price. Most importantly, there is an open forum for the students and public to interact. The lower foot and arm of the building contain flexible galleries, performance area, screening rooms, loading dock, storage, administration offices, and gift shop. Programmatically these have the closest relationship to the public and are easily accessible. The leg or tower portion of the building houses studios, classrooms, dark rooms, and two story gathering spaces. The studios consist of sculpture, painting, photography, and graphic art. These double height spaces act as connectors allowing the students to interact with each other and feel as though they are part of a larger whole. The library and café, in section, connect the lower galleries and upper school. This creates a common ground providing an opportunity for interaction to occur. The café also contains an outdoor terrace and sculpture garden, which faces the park. One can overlook the tops of the trees and beyond the edge of the city.
Such a juxtaposition of the serenity of a softly running creek and the vibrating of the bridge under my feet from the tons of steel rushing behind my back.
IN-BETWEEN OF LIGHT

The first concern for an art gallery is how to let natural light inside, while still protecting the work. Light is brought inside the space by bouncing and filtering light between the walls. No direct light enters the galleries. There is also a filtering of views out to nature. This gives one a sense of transition moving through the galleries, creating rhythms of light and views. Other events happen inside these two walls. There is a two-foot thick main structural wall, which is carved out at certain locations. The art is placed within the architecture. These walls can open to create a more intimate viewing space or close to make space for a larger event. These art galleries occur on the first three levels. These flexible gallery spaces are capable of giving definition to small environments as well as large installations.
SEMANTICS OF STRUCTURE

The syntax of my structure is created through the composition of load bearing walls and a skeletal frame. Conceptually this relates to my scheme of the two architectonic elements of the wall and the tower. The architecture of the wall creates a subtractive composition. This suggests that portions of the building have been carved away. Other areas of the building express an additive language. The stainless steel non-structural panels are recessed inside to reveal its tectonic nature. The solid portion of the wall and the window portion of the wall exist as two independent planes. A building can only be read at one scale when there is a dogmatic over expression of the frame. But, the combination of these structural systems allows the building to be experienced at a number of scales. The building is simultaneous more solid and more transparent without having to choose. There is an intertwining of structure influencing the creation of spaces, as well as, space informing the structure. As a result, the structural module coincides with the spatial module. The dimensions and spatial sequences inside inform and create the openings in the wall, which in turn reflect the layering and rhythms of the outermost facade. Through this process there is a revealing or indication of the events happening inside.
TECTONICS WITHIN THE WALL

A two foot thick wall is constructed with poured in place concrete. The finish of the concrete obtains a reflective surface through the use of a special plastic formwork. A lightweight framework is cantilevered off of the wall. This creates a space for the main circulation and mechanical chases. This rigid frame is then sheathed in thin sheets of stainless steel. The reflective nature of the concrete and metal create a strong redirection of natural indirect light into the galleries. This space-element hovers four feet off the ground, revealing its additive non-load bearing nature. This shield wall houses sculpture and paintings allowing one to experience glimpses of the exhibit while passing.
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Education
Master of Architecture
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
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University of Florida
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Professional Experience
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Cooper Carry & Associates Architects Inc
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Pappas Associates Architects
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PON Structural Engineers
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Honors / Awards
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Student Design Competition
Honorable Mention

Washington-Alexandria Architecture Consortium
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First Place

Montgomery Conference Center Competition
Summer Camp Tree House 2,000 budget
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