

THIRTEEN WAYS TO LOOK AT A LANDSCAPE NURSERY

Gean Moreno - Ernesto Oroza

1. Excluding a few churches and the German American Social Club, Miller Drive between 117th Avenue and 127th Avenue [in Miami] is a strip of plant and landscape nurseries. In a city where vines proliferate unchecked, hedges constantly threaten to violate their neat orders, mangroves suggest potential colonization of even waterways and shorelines, and grass and wild weeds reclaim terrain at an amazing pace, there is something perverse about these "boutiques" of greenery. But to consider the nursery in relation to nature is to misread it from the get go. Landscape nurseries belong, instead, to what we call the *pre-city*--a kind of abstract plane made up of recurring shapes and materials and colors that determine what the city will look like.

The city is compressed in the repeating objects, range of materials, limited rainbow of hues, and standard metrics found in nurseries and the other businesses that generate this *pre-city*--construction material depots, lumber yards, roofing companies, stone suppliers, tile distributors, home improvement stores, paint stores, and even pet stores. The *pre-city* is a dam of codes that have not yet been arranged into larger assemblages. The *terra cotta roof tiles* will one day be coupled with the *bougainvillea* that climbs along the side of the house which will be coupled with the imported *Bahamas grass* which will be coupled with the *decorative faux stone* with the house numbers on it which will be coupled with the *faux-wood white picket fence* which will be coupled with the *manatee-shaped mailbox* which will be coupled with the *golden retriever*.

2. The *pre-city* is not the historical condition that preceded the city as we know it. It exists *within* the contemporary city. Its presence, or better yet, its growing prominence, its undeniability, points to what a certain kind of contemporary city is. The *pre-city* generates its elementary particles. And these eventually seep into the urban texture at the level of the detail, the ornament, the roof tiles, decorative landscaping, the height of the walls, the width of doors, patio tiles, mailboxes. And seeping in, coupling into complex assemblages as they fan out, these elements come to constitute the urban texture, like new skin over what was there before.

3. Imagine the *pre-city* as a long strip of artifacts: royal palms linked to potted plumbagos linked to the metal fonts available to put the house numbers above the door linked to the color swatches at the display structure in the paint store linked to the prefab roof trusses in the building materials yard linked to the linoleum tiles from The Home Depot linked to plastic owls linked to... Take scissors to this strip. Arrange the pieces and you will end up with the houses and neighborhoods in which we live. But something is off with this description. Not so much the fact that the city comes in a strip, rolled up like a measuring tape or an inexhaustible spool of carpet, but that we need to be present to arrange things. Can't the scissored bits arrange themselves? Aren't they structured in such a way that they can slot together in precise ways? Doesn't the sheet rock always match the aluminum stud and isn't the areca palm always the same size as the planters available? A human organizer seems superfluous. This assertion, however, feels off, too. The moral of the inconclusive, little fable of the city as a strip of artifacts: that the city-dweller as neither a necessary nor a superfluous factor in the shaping of his or her environment points to the fact that the mode of exchange between the *pre-city*, as virtual substrate, and the mass of city-dwellers, as active agent, needs to be thought differently, diluting subject-object splits and proposing *fronts* that apply pressure to one another instead.

4. A parallel example to all the repeating outdoor objects in a nursery: a display of floor tiles and wood laminates in a store. It literally shows you, you are surprised now that you think about it, the flooring in all the houses that you have visited in the last six months. It is also showing you, you are certain, the flooring in most, if not all, of the houses that you will visit in the next six months. Excepting anomalous specimens that, due to lack of funds or a fetishizing impulse in the owners, maintain their original floors, all the styles of all the houses are there, consolidated--a sample display in which the entire city is collected. Of course, all these tiles and laminates are severed from the context in which you first saw them, whether in a friend's house or a client's condo; any affective dimension they may have acquired is instantly nullified. And not only this. These planes on which you have walked, which are of course for walking on, have been stood up, made strangely vertical. In the way that units are accumulated and displaced from their "natural" function in the *pre-city*, they acquire an uncanny dimension. They erupt out of the very texture they will produce, out of the fate that awaits them. That is, they explode back from the future, which is the present of all the objects that come together to make up the grammar of our living space. They disarticulate the seemingly natural order of this



space, reveal it as *composed out of a limited set of elements, as arranged information* and little else.

5. Once we begin to grasp the *pre-city* as a real if virtual dimension, an inexplicable presence--something that corrodes the easy relationship we had with our surroundings, but also something like a tracing die that highlights its own source and trajectory--begins to haunt the objects we live with, or rather it begins to haunt us through these objects. The golden retriever, dashing across the lawn, "disintegrates" into a code--a helix of meanings and images that we want to convey--that has been coupled with the proper counterparts. The *pre-city* scrambles and redraws. It reveals the contingent nature of the arrangements of objects in our environment. But a paradox is creeping in here. While the *pre-city* reveals any necessity of our arrangements as spurious, reveals the city as *merely* arranged information, at the same time, in gathering a finite number of particular objects, in discouraging the possibility of employing other objects in any consistent way in the production of the city by its very dominance, the *pre-city* makes the necessity of our urban orders inexorable, pre-determined. For what other kind of city could there be where the *pre-city* is the main conduit through which the elements that will give the city its character are filtered?

6. An irreducible ambiguity. The *pre-city* seems caught between serving as a determinant of our urban orders and as simply serving us, responding to a call we put out. After all, the arrangements that we live with--that string of information that runs from the terra cotta roof tile to the golden retriever--are not fortuitous or forced. They line up with our taste. We could go down the fashionable road of claiming that we have been duped into thinking that these objects are what we really want, that our desires and needs have been manufactured as much as the things that respond to them, but this doesn't feel right. It's inaccurate to present the *pre-city* as an overbearing set of prohibitions or limitations. Its forms are not tyrannically imposed. Their visibility, their proliferation in the city--the popularity of the golden retriever over the Saint Bernard, or the terra cotta roof tile over the shingle--is not independent from the decisions that city-dwellers make. (Salvage yards stand as testament to the way that disregarding these decisions leads to having to dump large amounts of merchandise.) The *pre-city* doesn't wield absolute control; it doesn't stunt city-dwellers' power. On the contrary, it certifies the usage of this power in the form of taste.

Taste, it should be clear, is not the magical capacity to discern the transhistorical and universal good things in life, an endowment usually reserved for a small group of privileged individuals. This definition is too simple. Taste is not territorialized in this way. Taste is a dynamic process--the favoring and demanding of a series of forms and attributes in alignment with a system of values shared by a particular social group. It's a pooled resource, *the pressure of a front*. The supposedly "lowly" or kitsch, in the scheme that we are proposing, exists on the same horizontal plane as the "high" or the "tasteful." Taste is a force, an unyielding demand that violently exercises its strength on the production of forms, in the flows of the market, and finally in the look of the environment.

Taste understood as a complex dynamic may complicate things for the architect and the professional designer, for whom it's easier to deal with established tastes--the "tasteful"--than with the dynamics of emergent ones. The present provides

clues in irregular, often obscure, ways. A taste still forming represents for the designer something like Florida swamp muck--one dives in taking risks whose very nature is impossible to know before hand. This makes the least hazardous path for the professional the one that is paved with the penchant for imitation and anecdotic design that has been validated by the market and the guardians of the discipline's history. The "tasteful" determines the designer's range; it instantly legitimizes his or her choices. But this occurs at the expense of keeping him or her oblivious to the way objects and cities are taking shape around them. It squashes any sense of wonder that may be directed at the increasingly indispensable things that fill landscape nurseries and home improvement stores.

7. Two fronts, the city takes shape at the high pressures points and frictional interfaces where they meet: *pre-city* and city-dwellers pushing various tastes. It is necessary to add a third, imposing front here: the city's (and/or county's) regulatory apparatus, embodied in its institutions, zoning code system, and legal precedents. We can add to this the collective behaviors of its citizens, calcified into habits and conventions, forced and fostered by previous regulations and laws, as part of an urban regulatory system. To speak, for instance, of "Miami as a city for cars," naming a precise way in which individuals engage their surroundings, is to translate into efficient shorthand decades of building patterns, capital allocation, and legislative influence. And this regulation also happens at other levels: in recurrent measurements and shapes in the parcelization of the land; in particular usages of the road grid, the highway system, and other infrastructures; in the structure of a tax system; in the distribution of services, from recycling to police. The city's regulatory apparatus is superseded by neither the stocks of the *pre-city* nor by prevailing tastes. It is, in fact, the tense negotiation between these three fronts, the tenuous balance that they maintain, that begins to explain how the contemporary city is produced. It's a balance that occasionally comes undone, as when a natural disaster forces governmental agencies to function in exceptionally forceful ways and instantly rewrite an unprecedented number of building codes or lists of allowable construction materials, call for and enact emergency legislation, regardless of prevailing tastes or existing *pre-city* stocks.

8. The taste of its multi-class and varied clientele, the waves of immigrants and capital, generational differences, as well as the instrumental regulation imposed by city and county codes, provoke in the nursery a unique phenomenon of specialization and natural selection. The stone lions, the cement apes and dromedaries, as well as the arecas, royal palms, bromelias and ferns are locked in a battle for commercial survival. Two decades ago, for instance, when narco-capital began to feed Kendall's local economy, and radiate out into the city and beyond, life-sized horses cast in cement were a rather successful species. This no doubt had to do with the fetishization of Pasofino culture in the narco world and the purchase of numerous local ranches by folks in the trade. A matrix of desires, imitations, and needs coalesced in a taste for equestrian archetypes. What this means is that, as in natural selection, it is often external forces, environmental shifts, and unforeseeable strains or opportunities that determine the nature of the merchandise. The horses prospered as long as local drug routes were opened, Colombian cartels were healthy, and South

continued on page 15

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SEASON EXHIBITION OPENS NOV 10TH, 2010

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155 NE 38th Street
Suite 100
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305.576.8570
www.locustprojects.org
Conversation: Jim Drain and Silvia Cubina, Executive Director/Chief Curator of the Bass Museum of Art.
NOV 11TH AT 6:30 PM
Jim Drain
Saturday's Ransom
NOV13TH OPENING RECEPTION 7-10PM

ART AND CULTURE CENTER OF HOLLYWOOD
1650 Harrison Street
Hollywood, FL 33020
http://artandculturecenter.org
Phone: 954 921 3274
Sinisa Kukec:
And Yet Another Wayward Landscape
Stephan Tugrul:
En Masse
SEPT. 11, 2010 – JAN. 9, 2011
In the "Focus South Florida: project room Luis Alonso Barkgia:
Mundos Perfeitos
NOV. 23, 2010 - JAN. 9, 2011
OPENING RECEPTION. WEDNESDAY NOV. 17, 6-9PM
GALLERY HOURS
10 AM – 5 PM, TUESDAY – FRIDAY
NOON – 4 PM, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
CLOSED MONDAYS, CLOSED NOV. 18 – 22

ART@WORK
1245 SW 87th Avenue, Miami, FL 33174
Pablo Cano
Marionettes and Workshop Drawings
September 6th through November 19, 2010
Antoni Miralda
Lingua
NOVEMBER 27, 2010 THROUGH FEBRUARY 25, 2011

FARISIDE GALLERY
1305 SW 87th Avenue, Miami, FL 33174
Raul Perdomo
The Multiverse Works
OCTOBER 29TH THROUGH NOVEMBER 25, 2010
Arturo Cuenca
House As Subject
NOVEMBER 27, 2010 THROUGH JANUARY 11, 2011

GIRLS' CLUB
117 Ne 2nd Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
954.828.9151
Frances Trombly
Paintings
Facsimile, works from the collection of Francie Bishop Good + David Horvitz and others, including Ghada Amer, Kevin Arrow, Amanda Burnham, Sarah Lucas, Amy Mahnick, Rita McBride, Elaine Reichek, Leyden Rodriguez-Casanova, Jonathan Seliger
OPEN WED-FRI 1-5PM
OPENING NOV 30, 7-9PM

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101C West Flagler Street
Miami, Florida 33130
305-375-5792 Direct
305-375-1492 Main
www.historymiami.org
Tropical Dreams:
A People's History of South Florida
Florida Cattle Ranching:
Five Centuries of Tradition
SEPTEMBER 17, 2010, THROUGH JANUARY 23, 2011
Estampas del Caribe Nicaragüense
Portraits of the Nicaraguan Caribbean
SEPTEMBER 17, 2010, THROUGH JANUARY 23, 2011

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
MAIN LIBRARY, 1st FLOOR EXHIBITION SPACE, 101 W. Flagler St., 305.375.2665
Franklin Einspruch
The Talk that Walked
NOVEMBER 4 – DECEMBER 19, 2010
PROGRAM AND RECEPTION: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 6:30-8:30PM

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
MAIN LIBRARY, AUDITORIUM, 101 W. Flagler St., 305.375.2665
Agustina Woodgate
Growing Up
THROUGH DECEMBER 15, 2010

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
HISPANIC LIBRARY, 1398 SW 1ST.
305.643.8574
10,865 – Fernando Garcia
From The Permanent Collection Of The Miami-Dade Public Library System

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
MIAMI BEACH REGIONAL, 227 22ND ST., 305.535.4219
Kari Snyder And Helen Webster
Nature Reflected
THROUGH DECEMBER 7, 2010
MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

MAIN LIBRARY, 2ND FL. EXHIBITION SPACE, 101 W. Flagler St., 305.375.2665
Florida Arcane
From The Society For The Preservation Of Lost Things And Missing Time
THROUGH DECEMBER 9, 2010

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
NORTH DADE REGIONAL, 2455 NW 183RD ST., 305.625.6424
Recent Acquisitions From The Permanent Collection
THROUGH JANUARY 18, 2011

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2021 Nw 1st Place, Miami, FL, 33127.
Tel. 305 482 1621
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Visual | Dance | the after-after party's show
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SPACE + TIME + EVENTS [visual art & dance collaboration]
Ivonne Batanero, Consuelo Castañeda, Liliam Dooley, Elizabeth Doud, Liony García, Rudi Goblen, Afua Hall, Alan Laird, Hamlet Lavastida, Heather Malloney, Maritza Molina, Gustavo Matamoros, Priscila Marrero & Carlota Pradera, Gean Moreno & Ernesto Oroza, Ilana Reynolds, Yali Romagoza, Cesar Trasobares
DECEMBER 2-5, 2010.

ZONES ART FAIR
www.zonesartfair.org
EDGE ZONES ART CENTER 47 NE 24th St.
Miami FL 33137, 305 303 8852
Duodecad
Rita Bard, David Leight, Rafael Lopez-Ramos, Charo Oquet, Raul Perdomo, Brian Reedy, Freddy Rodriguez, Eduardo Sarmiento, Kari Snyder, Angel Vapor, Pedro Vizcaino, Gretchen Wagoner
NOVEMBER 13, 2010
MEET THE ARTISTS: 7-10 PM

GALLERY DIET
174 NW 23 Street, Miami, FL 33127
www.gallerydiet.com
Abby Manock
Lesser Evils
NOVEMBER 27TH - DECEMBER 22ND, 2010
OPENING RECEPTION: NOVEMBER 27TH 7 - 10 PM.
11.30.10 - 12.05.10 9 A.M. - 7 P.M.

DIMENSIONS VARIABLE
www.dimensionsvariable.net
171 NE 38 Street, Miami FL 33137
Daniel Milewski
Three Color Sunburst
NOVEMBER 13TH - DECEMBER 25, 2010
OPENING RECEPTION: NOVEMBER 13TH 7 - 10 PM.
BY APPOINTMENT AND 11.30.10 - 12.05.10 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.

THE DE LA CRUZ COLLECTION
23 NE 41 Street, Miami FL 33137
www.delacruzcollection.org
Christy Gast
Herbert Hoover Dyke
NOVEMBER 30TH - DECEMBER 31, 2010
11.30.10 - 12.05.10 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

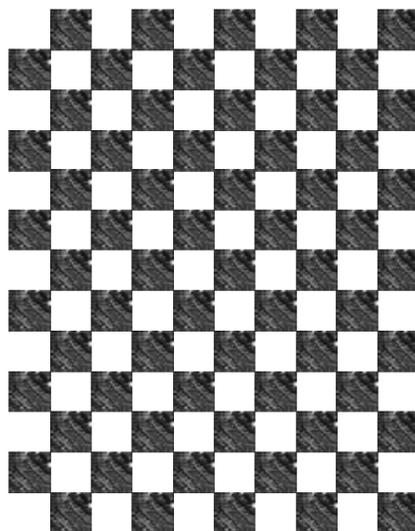
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TABLOID #16
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- La Loggia Restaurant**
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- Pinecrest Library**
5835 SW 111th Street, Miami
- Miami Art Museum**
101 West Flagler Street, Miami

Miami based artist Nicolas Lobo conversing with Pablo Olivares, a South Florida roofing contractor on the subject of construction code changes after hurricane Andrew.

(Translated from Spanish by the artist)
 Photos from the archives of Pablo Olivares

NL: So tell me, when did you start working as a roofer?

PO: I started about a year before hurricane Andrew, at the end of 1990.

NL And what was the first job you did?

PO: I think the first was fixing the roofing tiles of Town and Country mall

NL: So did you work mostly in the southwest area of the city?

PO: Yes, I had recently arrived to the country and had been working in construction for some years in Argentina. I met the owner of a company here and when he found out that I had experience, he got me started with roofing here in Miami.

NL: Ok, so how did hurricane Andrew affect your job? The hurricane came and then...did you start working again immediately or what?

PO: When the hurricane came I don't think anyone imagined it would be so big and so devastating. We lived on Bird Road and 60th Avenue, all the trees had fallen and blocked our roads. So, the first job was to clear the trees to be able to go work. Of course there was nothing to work with, no gasoline, no materials. We also had to start getting those things.

NL: What were the first changes in your job after Andrew?

PO: Kendall was destroyed, so was the whole southern zone of the county. As you drove south towards Cutler Ridge and Naranja you passed entire neighborhoods turned into piles of garbage.

NL: So at this time did you realize that all the zoning and codes would change?

PO: Not really, our first task was to survey the damage for all the clients we already had from before the storm. Many clients had roof damage and we tried to somehow stop continuing water damage to the building, either by laying a tarp or #30 tar paper if the plywood of the roof was intact.

NL: So there was plenty of work and probably a feeling that a lot of money could be made? But what was the main obstacle to all this, materials?

PO: Yes, the first months there was nothing, no materials but also no people, not enough qualified roofers. After a few months the companies became more organized and kept hiring people, anybody, and there were even doctors climbing the ladders to work the roofs, thinking they were going to make a fortune. Many people grabbed a roof shovel and tried their hand, but most realized it was not for them.

NL: (Laughter) The doctors...no.

PO: (Laughter) No.

NL: So there were also a lot of people coming from all over the country to work?

PO: Yes, US-1 from Bird Road to I-95, under the Metrorail, was a tent city for all the out of town workers--just tents, trucks and generators. It was madness and it lasted quite a while too, almost a year.

NL: On one side the work was progressing, materials were arriving, people were being hired. But how were the codes and zoning of the city doing, how was that changing?

PO: Well, after doing the emergency repairs we began to have bigger jobs, condominiums to rebuild, things like that. Insurance companies were paying out like crazy and people were building with the money. The insurance appraisers at that time had no idea what to do, so people were getting checks written to cover everything, from the laundry machine to the roof. Once again, we had plenty of work but no materials and no people. To solve the materials problem I remember the owner of the company going north and loading trucks with tar paper, nails, wood, tar, everything for roofing, and bringing them back south full of materials.

NL: So did you have to pull permits to do these jobs, were there inspections?

PO: Yes, we did. We got inspec-



tions but I think the inspectors in the beginning were a bit confused. After a while the city and county realized they had to balance people desperate to fix their house with the longer term safety of new construction. It's hard when someone has rain in the house to tell them that the roofing truss has not passed inspection. But soon the county realized it had to do something and that's when the code started to change.

NL: How long was it until the changes started?

PO: I don't remember exactly, but it was about six months after the storm that the first changes were made. For example, before the hurricane it was acceptable to use particle board for roofs. One of the first changes was to specify plywood. The particle board roofs were terrible. You would be standing on the roof and it would feel like a trampoline. It was good for nothing. But this was not only in Kendall, the hard code is not only in Miami. It exists in all of South Florida.

NL: It sounds like all the construction happening before Andrew was more or less the same construction standards as slum shacks, only prettier.

PO: Well, for example: before you could just use wood products everywhere, now its required to use cinder blocks to make the perimeter walls. Windows now require steel.

NL: Ok but those who designed the new codes were primarily political folks?

PO: Engineers set the specific rules; they began to do tests.

I remember the first thing to change besides the plywood rule, were the metal disks that hold the tar paper down, the thin tabs had to be nailed. Before it was ok to staple them into the roof, but now it was required to use nails with large heads, roofing nails. But soon the engineers realized that the nails were smooth and they would pull out too easily in a storm. So what did they do? They specified a new kind of nail, the ring shank nail. This new type of nail was almost a screw and it grabbed the plywood much better.

NL: So did the nail industry have to redesign its products? Or did they already have this type of nail and it was only the use that changed?

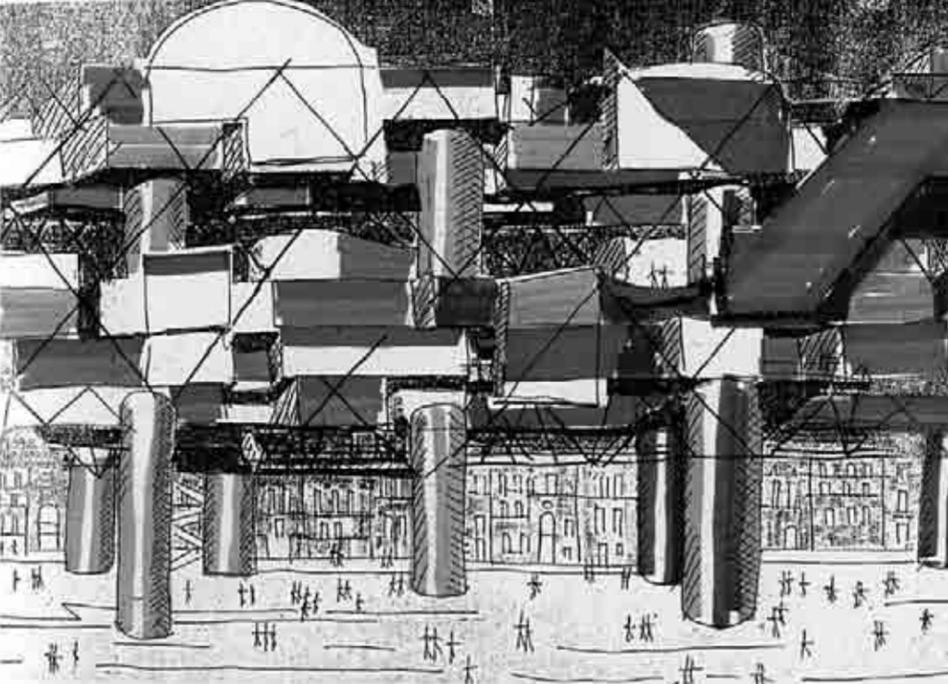
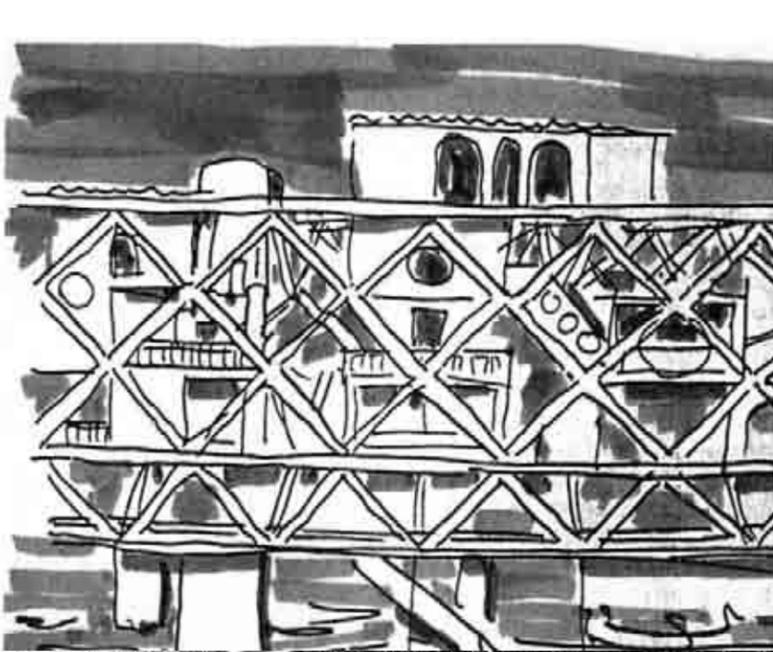
PO: Yes, the whole nail industry changed. They came out with roofing nail guns, coil nails etc. The nail industry had to provide new ways of working for everyone in the roofing industry.

NL: Where are these nail companies? Are they here in the U.S. or in another country?

PO: They are here in the U.S.
 NL: And these companies that made the nails, did they make more money with this new code?

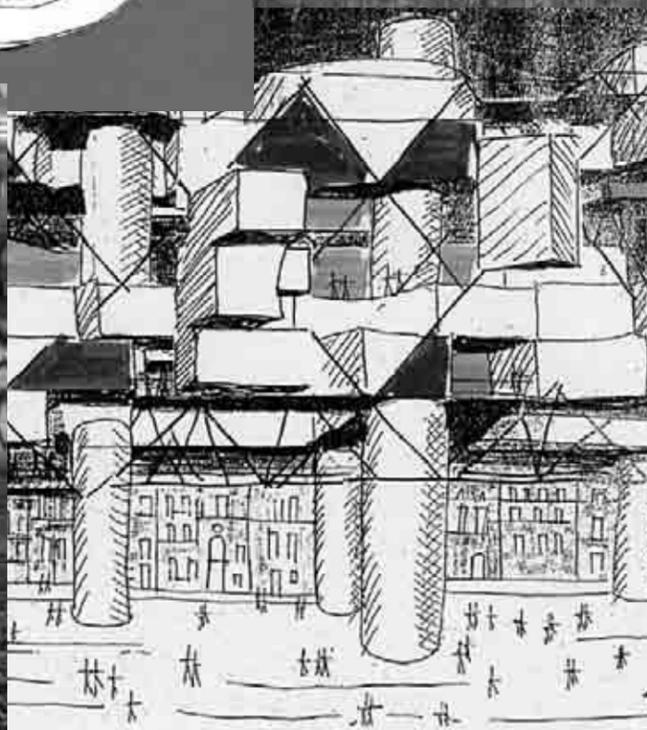
PO: Absolutely! All the way down to the metal thin tabs. After Andrew, a company started to make thin tabs from soda cans. The thin tab rules changed when they realized that the thin tabs rusted and could no longer hold down the tar paper. So the code changed to specify only galvanized thin tabs with ring shank nails. After the first layer of tar paper, the #30, we put down the



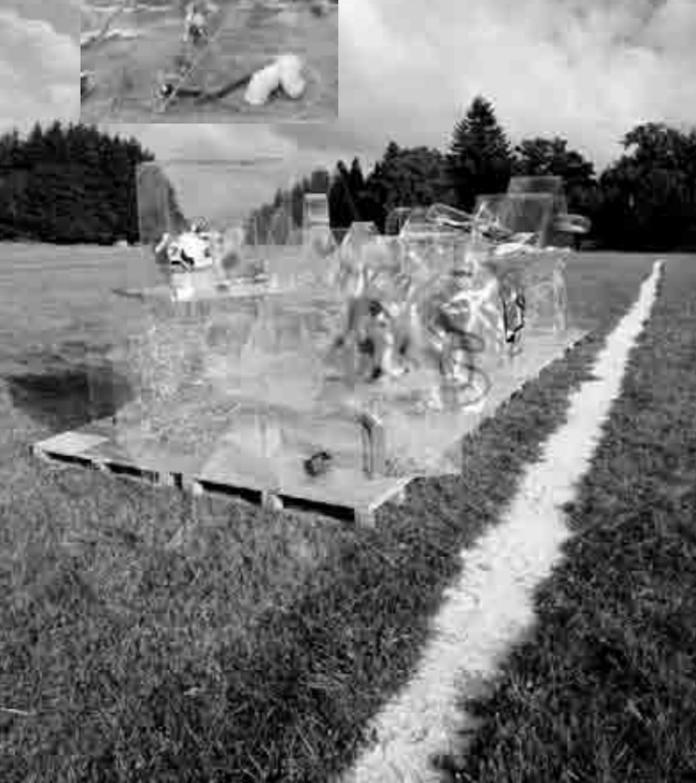


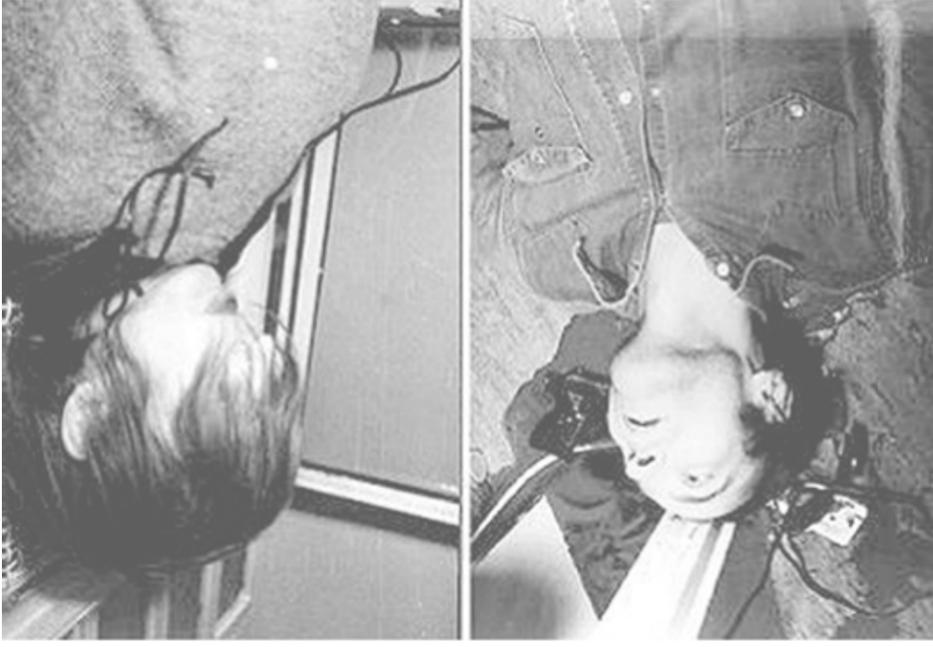
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Project adapted to exhibition C, 1961 DENTAC



Adapted project 1961

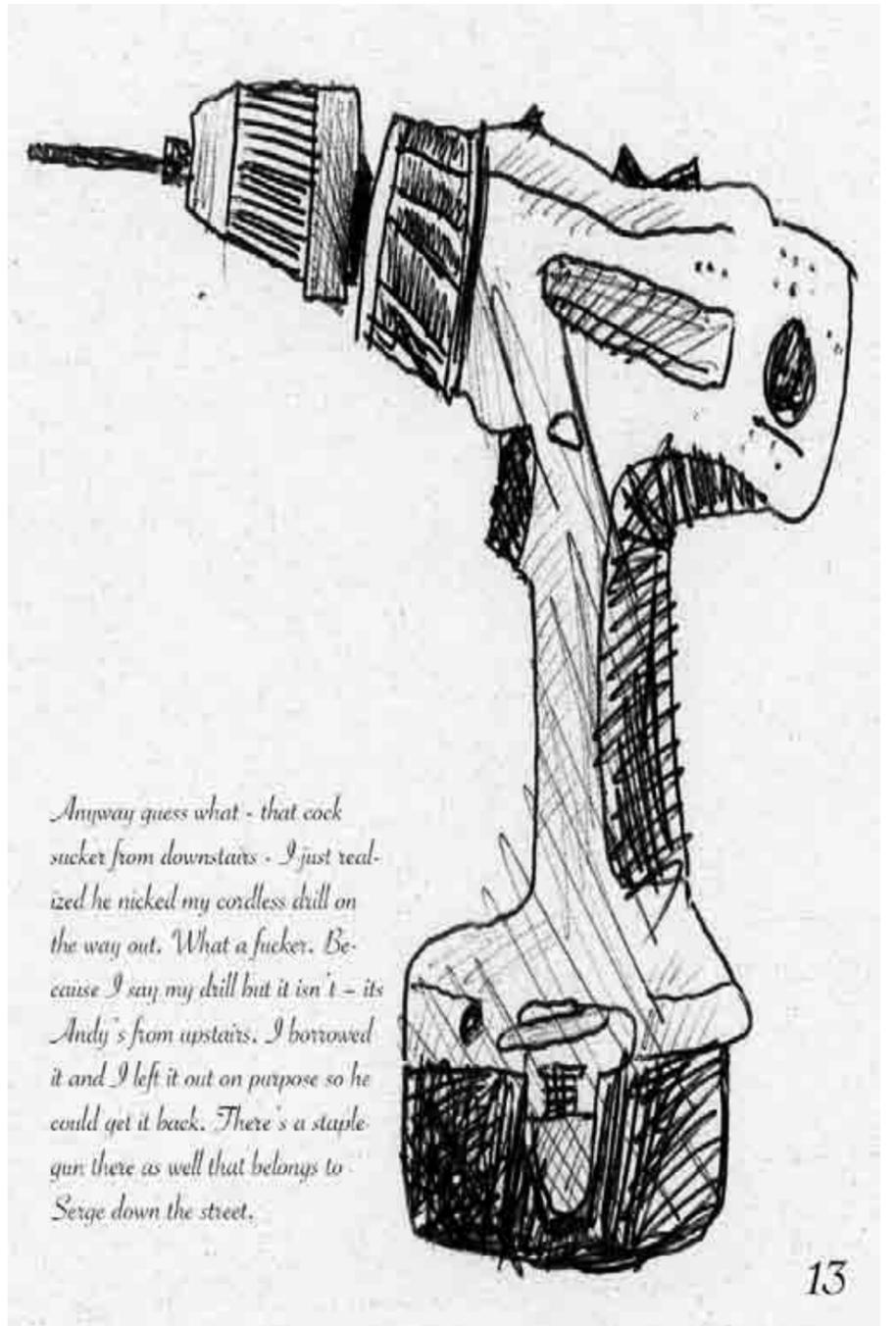




*I can feel the bluebottle fly
 (Calliphora) laying its eggs in my
 eye. They find you quickly when you
 die - seize the opportunity. Pale whit-
 ish larvae will soon hatch from the
 eggs. Its getting dark outside now.*



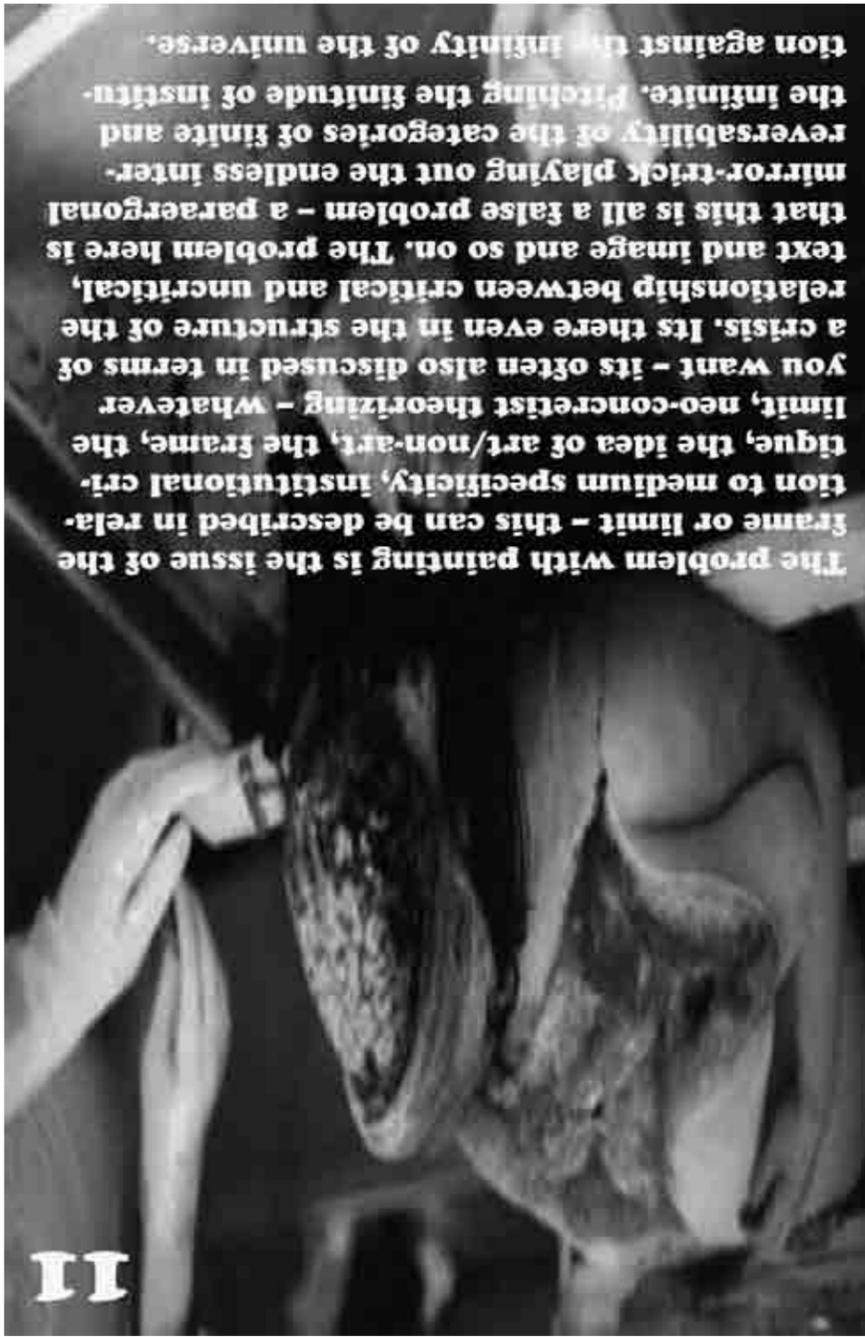
*Being dead I can now see all this clearly. As someone who has just seen themselves
 played out in the cosmic dialectic of life and death I can see clearly the infinitely faceted
 regression and beautiful sorrowful complexity of these procedures . . . or rhythms . . . but its
 not like that.*



*Anyway guess what - that cock
 sucker from downstairs - I just real-
 ized he nicked my cordless drill on
 the way out. What a fucker. Be-
 cause I say my drill but it isn't - its
 Andy's from upstairs. I borrowed
 it and I left it out on purpose so he
 could get it back. There's a staple
 gun there as well that belongs to
 Serge down the street.*

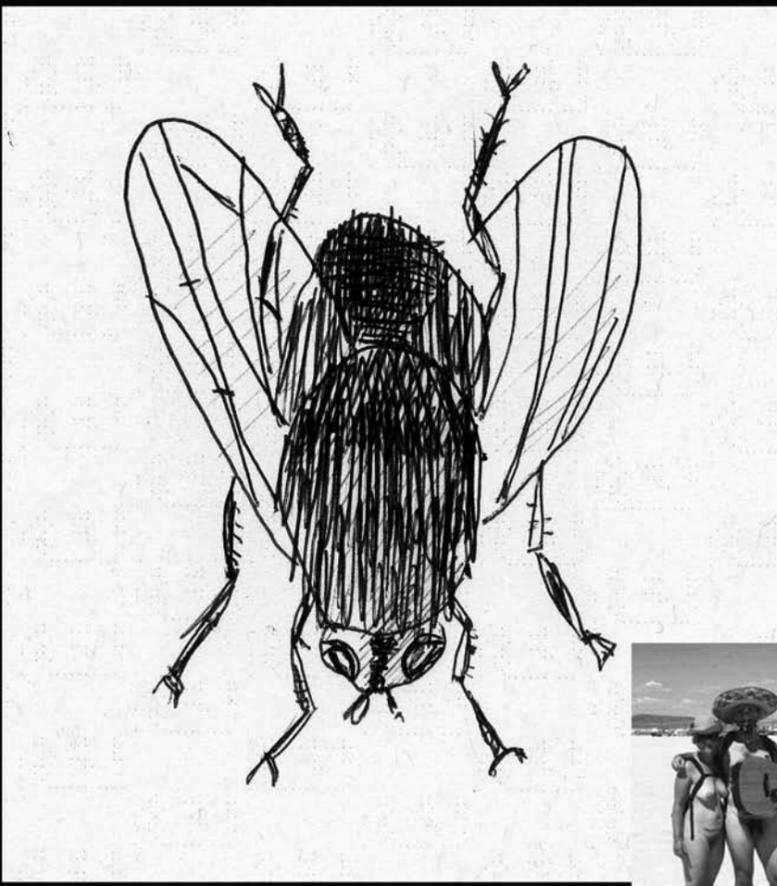


Over the next few hours the green and purple stains of putrefaction creep up my abdomen like some beautiful ornate marble; then distension and swelling of the body and blubbing, with purple train



The problem with painting is the issue of the frame or limit - this can be described in relation to medium specificity, institutional critique, the idea of art/non-art, the frame, the limit, neo-concretist theorizing - whatever you want - its often also discussed in terms of a crisis. Its there even in the structure of the relationship between critical and uncritical, text and image and so on. The problem here is that this is all a false problem - a paragonal mirror-trick playing out the endless inter-reversability of the categories of finite and the infinite. Pitching the finitude of institution against the infinity of the universe.

The people who have been moving into the warehouse flat downstairs just popped up with a bottle of wine to introduce themselves. They thought I was just standing here - maybe thought I was a bit deaf or something - and walked right across the floor click-clacking on the sanded wooden floor boards and tapped me on the shoulder --they only realized I was dead when they saw my blackened face and the fly walking across my eye.




I guess they may be moving out now.

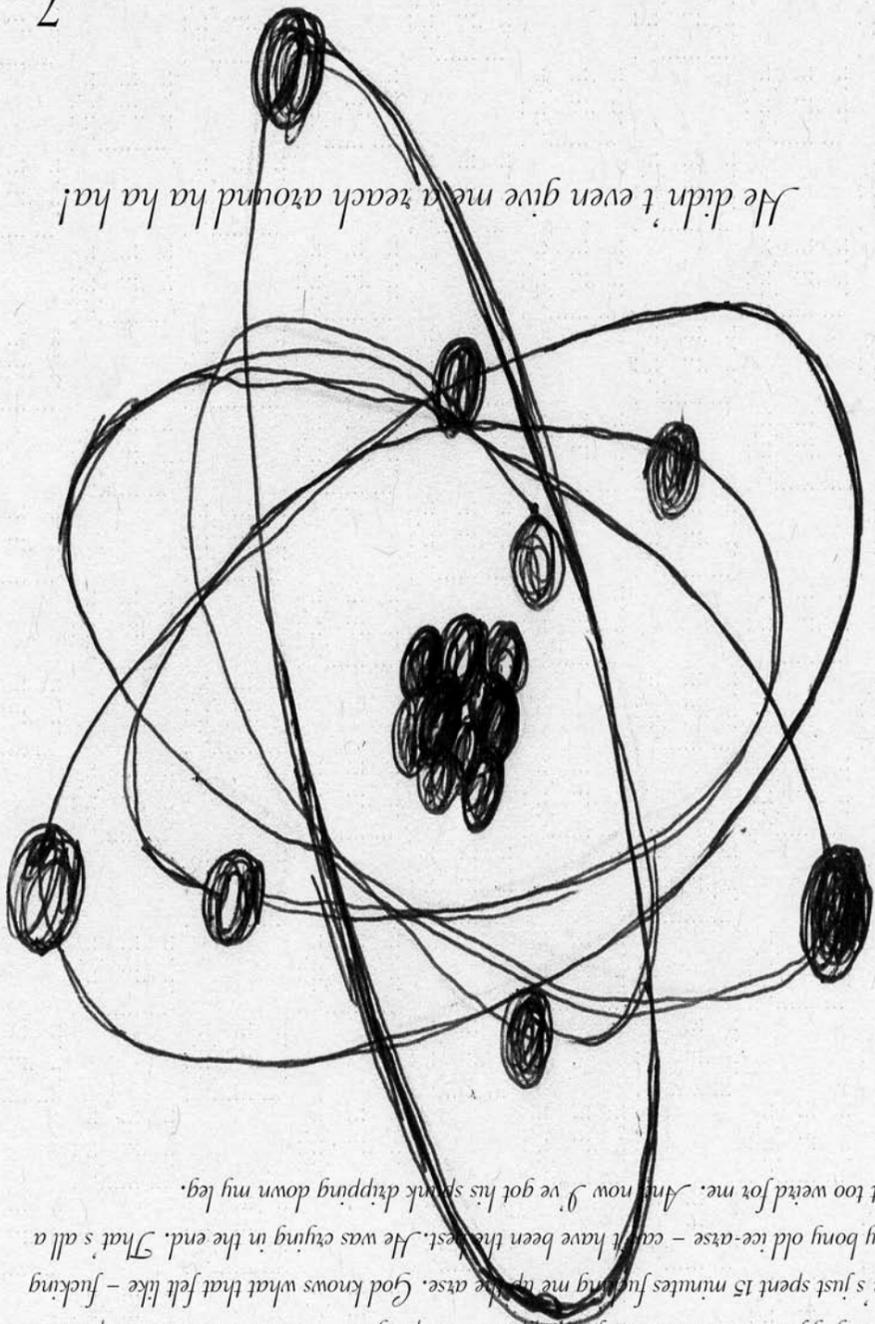
6

Plays with your mind over a period of time because you are living in it. And you can't get away. The floors in particular slope. You walk up a slope from the living room area to the small kitchen area. Fucks with your head.



You know what there was some heavy shit that happened to me when I was young but it could be argued that it was the architecture of this building which really tipped things over the edge. These ex-warehouse units are fucked. Nothing is parallel or forty-five degrees. All of its all over the place.

He didn't even give me a reach around ha ha ha!



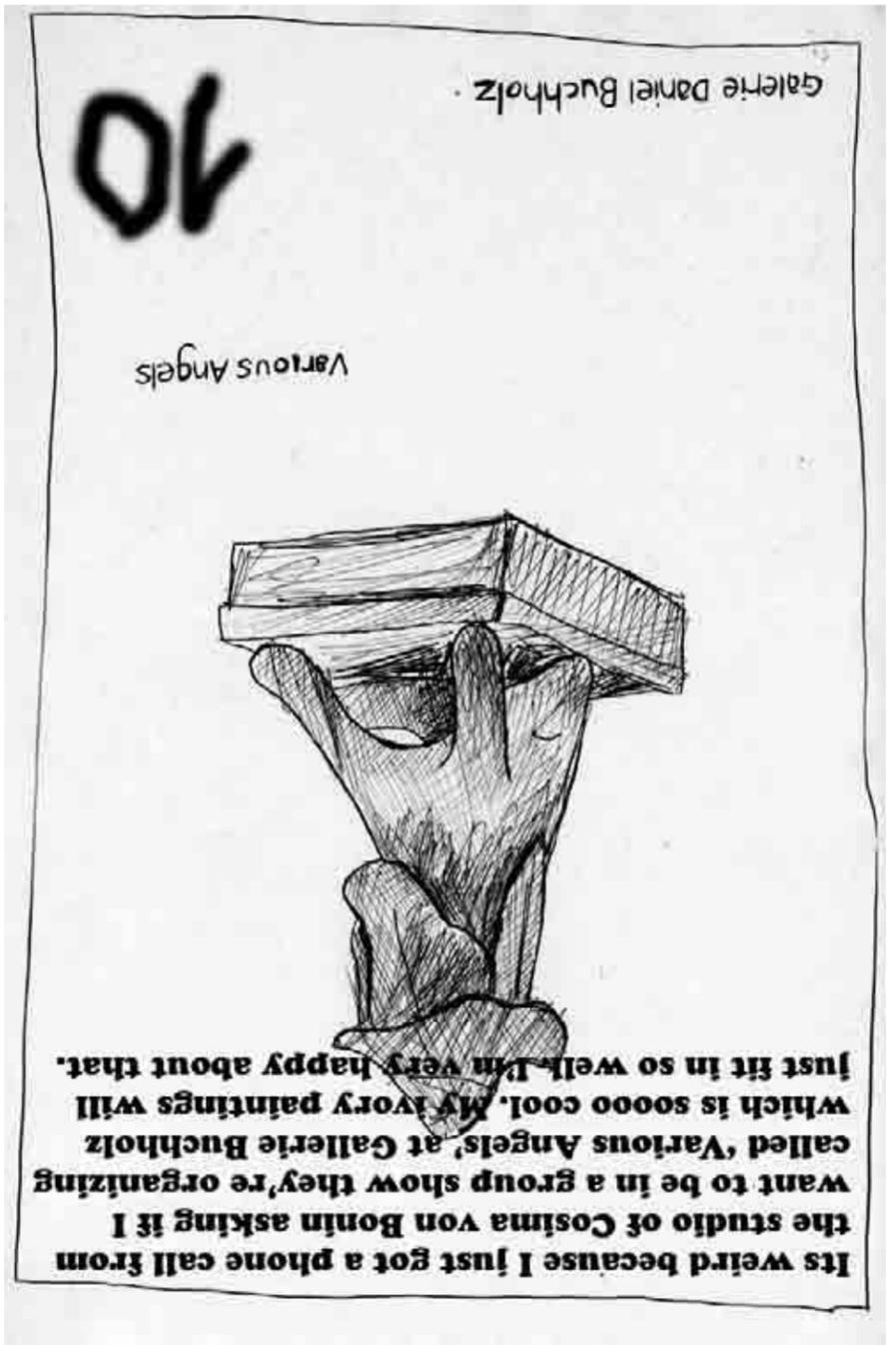
The guy from downstairs has just popped back up again - turns out he's a necrophiliac - he's just spent 15 minutes fucking me up the arse. God knows what that felt like - fucking my bony old ice-arse - can't have been the best. He was crying in the end. That's all a bit too weird for me. And now I've got his sperm dripping down my leg.

Dear living person,

By the time you read this I will already be hanging from the ceiling of my live-work studio flat, my neck will have stretched to allow my feet to touch the floor, the rope pulling at my neck so as to twist my head in an attitude as if I were casually looking out of my window, gazing at the territorialized conformity of the street below.



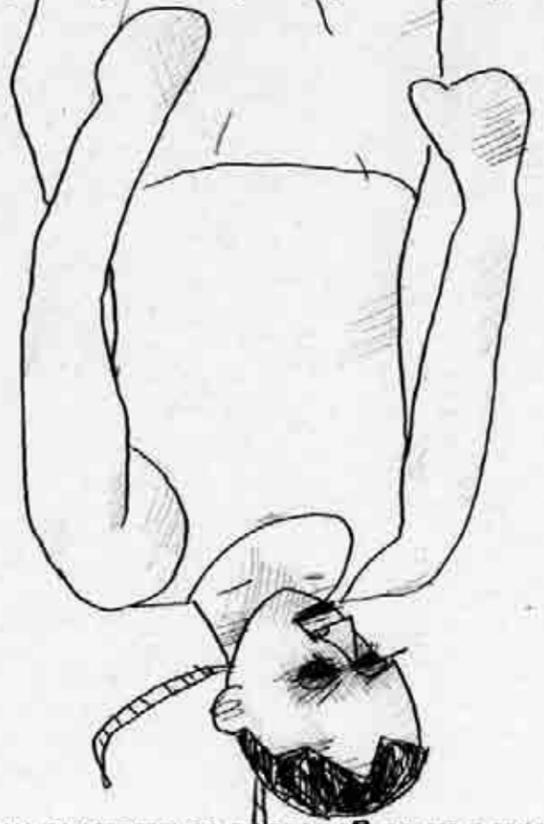
As people walk back and forward like banal cunts on the way to work or to pick up a coffee or some other shit. It's a busy street now especially since they redeveloped the shopping mall. It looks like I'm just standing here looking out the window.



That guy from downstairs came up again. With a couple of friends this time. Someone was licking my ring-piece for a while. Must be some kind of extreme necrophilia - people who like fucking decaying bodies. To be honest it's OK with me. Eyes bulging, organs and cavities bursting, veins marbling and the spread of putrefaction stains to neck and limbs. And as putrefaction spreads - slipping across the surface in a further play of resignification, the process overlaps and underlaps in the microscopy of figure, skin, pore, atom - searching for intelligibility and unintelligibility alike in the shine and sweat of transformation. A glutinous coming-to-be - oscillating and repeating across the liquid slick of gore and slime, with the movement of maggots swarming and bulging beneath the swilling surface; with the germs fucking and procreating above and the torso swollen and burst to expose the jellied organs within - pinks and gay reds - synchronizing with the sunset out the window.

9

way ... by becoming a tortured, contorted human bridge between the dinosaurs of 80s German painting and new, radically contextualised, gendered, gayed, and thereby politicised art networks ... in a sense he gave me permission to paint.



I'm a big fan of Michael Krebber, and his group of friends in Cologne - I love the language they use, mockery, humour, light digressions and particularisms - its such an amazingly truthful, intelligent, loving, inclusive social scene. And man I'm so grateful to Michael ... for the

8

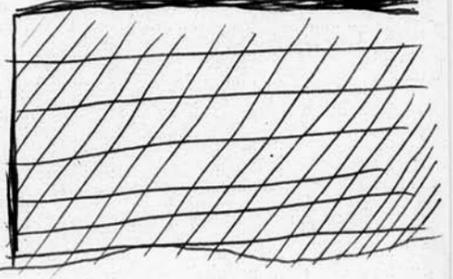
Yes, like Michael Krebber



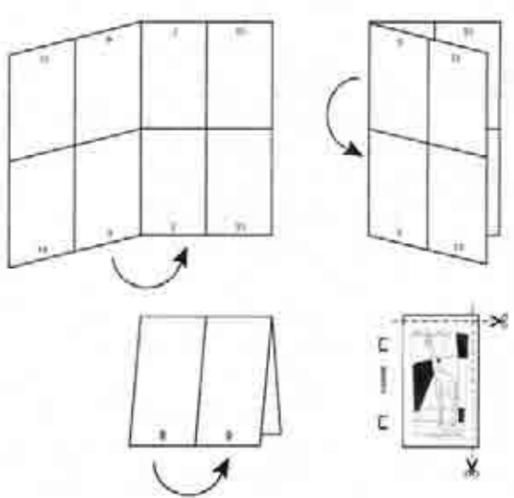
white cube

Anyway my last artworks are all lined up along the wall over there if you fancy a look. Its my wavy series. Oil paintings of wavy (and a few nubby) carvings of animals and humans. In particular, its the whiteness that interests me - have you read Moby Dick? Yeah. The way white is used there. And ... er ... also referring to the whiteness of the...

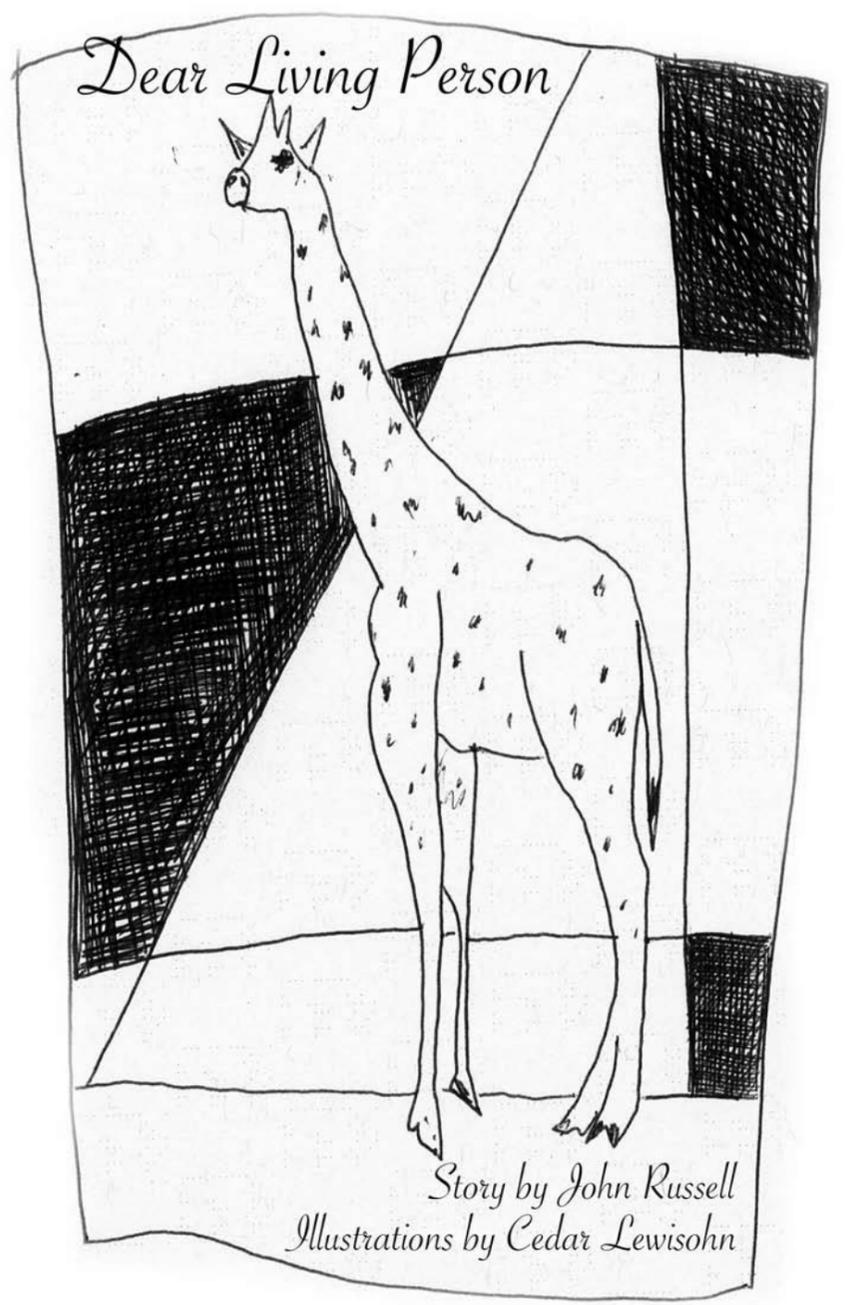
MOBY DICK



*But anyway been nice talking to you.
All the best,
Corpse*

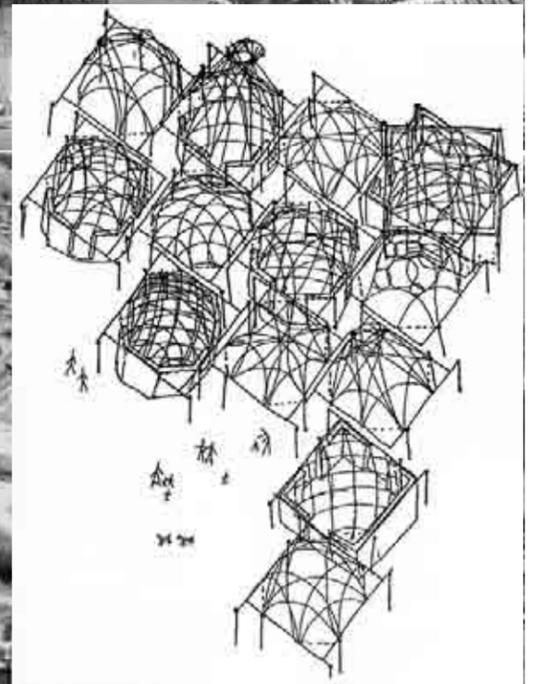
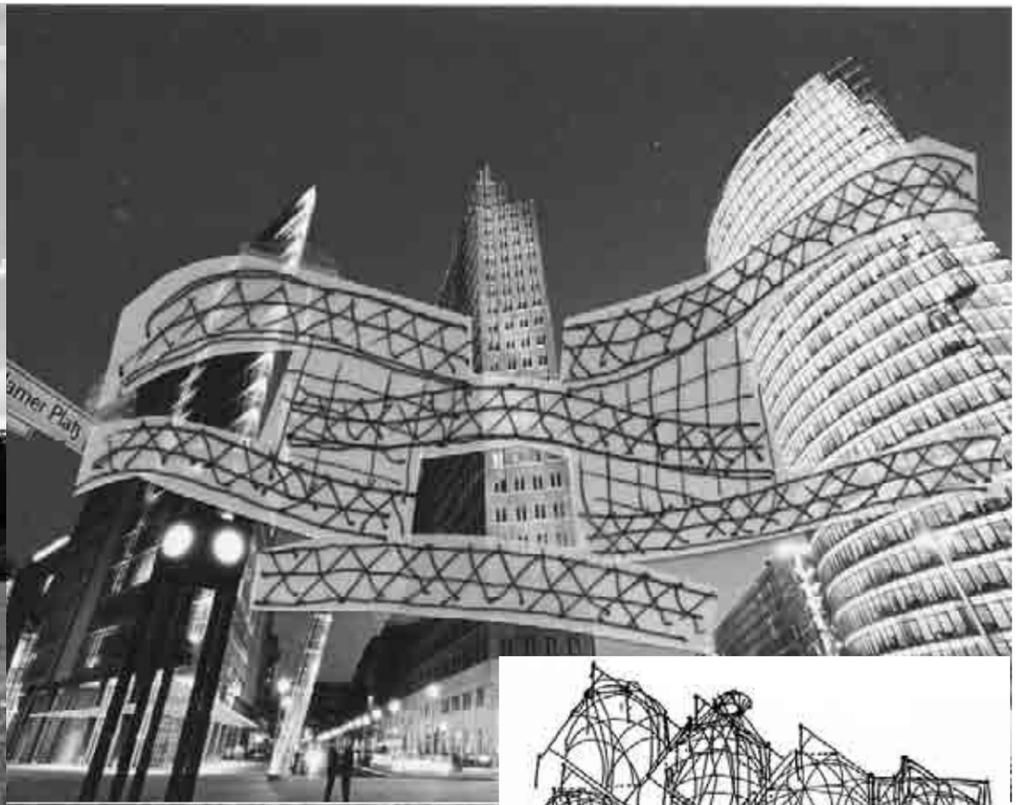


FOLDING INSTRUCTIONS

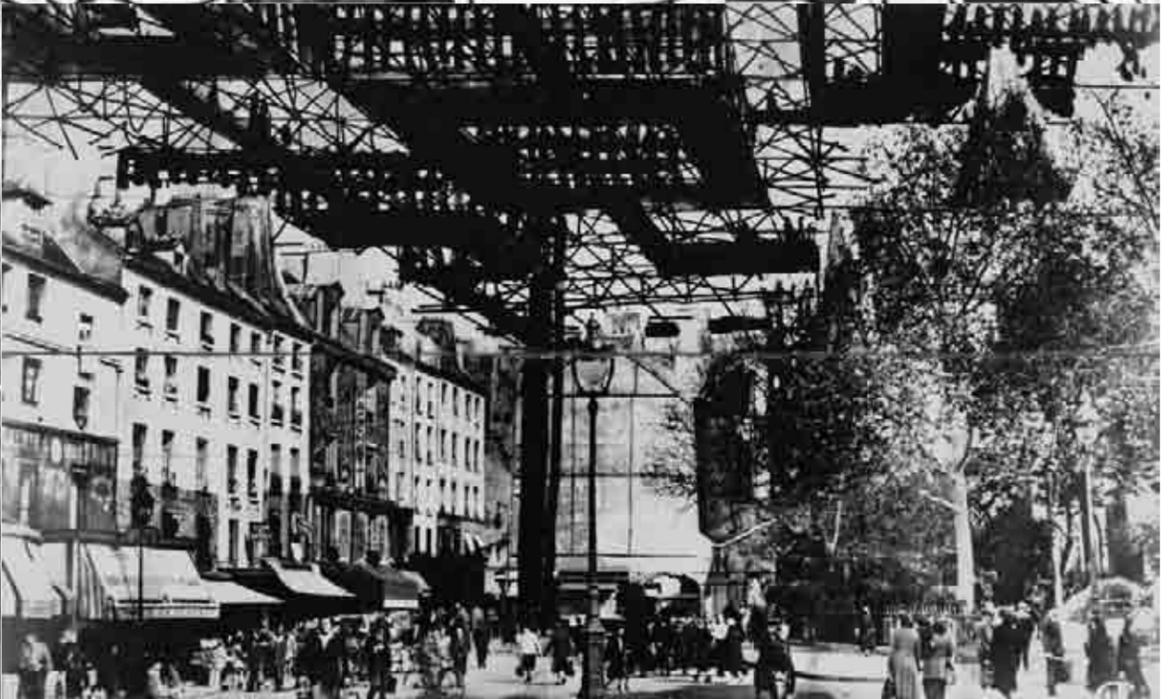
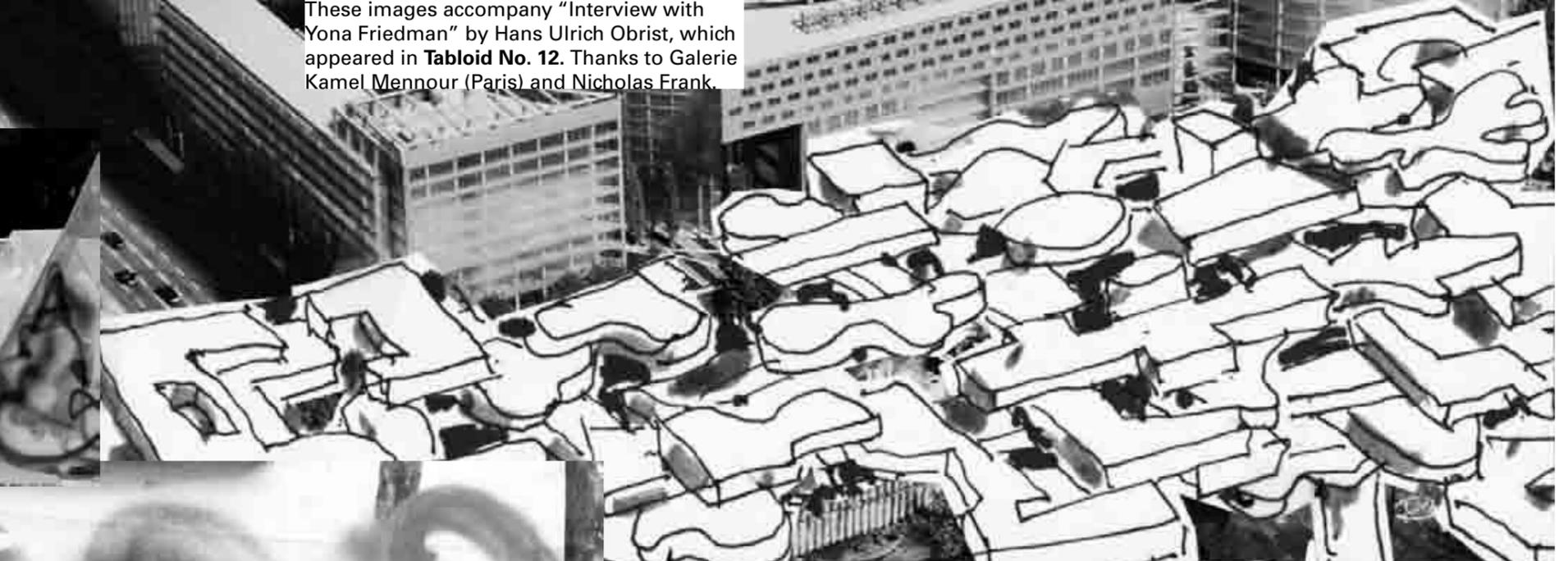


Dear Living Person

Story by John Russell
Illustrations by Cedar Lewisohn



These images accompany "Interview with Yona Friedman" by Hans Ulrich Obrist, which appeared in **Tabloid No. 12**. Thanks to Galerie Kamel Mennour (Paris) and Nicholas Frank.



(Miami based artist Nicolas Lobo conversing with Pablo Olivares, a South Florida roofing contractor on the subject of construction code changes after hurricane Andrew.)

#90 with a hot mop of tar and then the shingles. The roof tiles were put down with roof tile cement. The city changed that and specified that in addition to being set in mortar it was necessary to put a nail through the tiles in the first three rows. The idea was that the wind would get strong under the overhang and pick up the tiles peeling off the whole roof.

NL: It sounds like every month the rules would change.

PO: Oh yes. One of the fundamental things was the roofing plywood. No more particle board and no more half inch plywood, only five eights would be accepted at the minimum.

NL: Do you think those in the construction industry here were trying to influence the decisions in code changes?

PO: Not really.

NL: Everyone was operating completely honestly?

PO: What can I tell you? I'm sure some people were taking advantage but it was not common.

PO: Very expensive, yes. The cost increase was substantial.

NL: Double? Triple?

PO: Its hard to say. What happened was that there were so many appraisers who had no idea what was going on, they were handing out money and they were grossly overpaying for the jobs.

NL: And were there occasions when people went North and returned with materials, only to find out that what they had bought was no longer accepted by the fast changing codes?

PO: What was changing fundamentally was what I explained, the screws, the nails, the thin caps. What happened was for example: before the storm paper #15 was ok, now it was required to use #30. So you have a big stock of #15? Well, then you just double up the layers of #15 and that makes #30.

NL: And this was allowed?

PO: Just after the storm it was ok. Now of course its not allowed. But people were allowed to use up their stocks of materials and no one would tell them different.

NL: Ok, so what about the roof trusses? Were

to get permits?

PO: Yes, much more so. To get final approval on a new house, for example, it must have hurricane shutters or hurricane windows with special glass.

NL: Would you say that the shape of buildings here in Miami has been strongly influenced by the forces of hurricanes then?

PO: I don't think so. Visually, from outside, you can't tell for example if the walls of a house are concrete or wood.

NL: Yes, but since the roof is now so much more expensive it means they have to cut costs somewhere.

PO: Well, it just makes houses more expensive.

NL: But if you decide to make a house that is a bit unusual wouldn't the inspector be less likely to approve even if its a strong house?

PO: Yes, I see what you mean.

NL: For example, people are now trying to make "green" houses but its almost impossible to get them approved.



NL: There were not many stories of corruption?

PO: I think the city was too preoccupied with the idea of making sure this did not happen again. There were roofing companies from every state you can imagine working here. Every day literally thousands of square feet of roofing was being done in Dade County and the county government wanted it to be done properly. So every week they would change the code, not for profit but because new test results were always coming out.

NL: Yes?

PO: And then came the foam, the poly-foam. Once the foam was accepted into the code everything else became less important.

NL: Ok but all of a sudden the cost of building a roof drastically increased?

there many changes there? With hurricane straps and stuff like that?

PO: Yes, there were big changes there as well, from the tie beam on up. Now you have to embed straps within the concrete of the tie beam, the trusses are more re-enforced.

NL: And did hurricane straps exist before or were they only used after the storm?

PO: The straps stayed pretty much the same, what changed was the way of attaching them to the wood. Before you would put only a few nails into the straps, but after it had to have more nails and the inspector would check very carefully the nailing of the straps. But most important was the attachment of the truss to the tie beam. One mistake could be fatal.

NL: So now it's obviously much more difficult

PO: Yes, those you really can't make down here because of the codes.

NL: Which came from the hurricane...

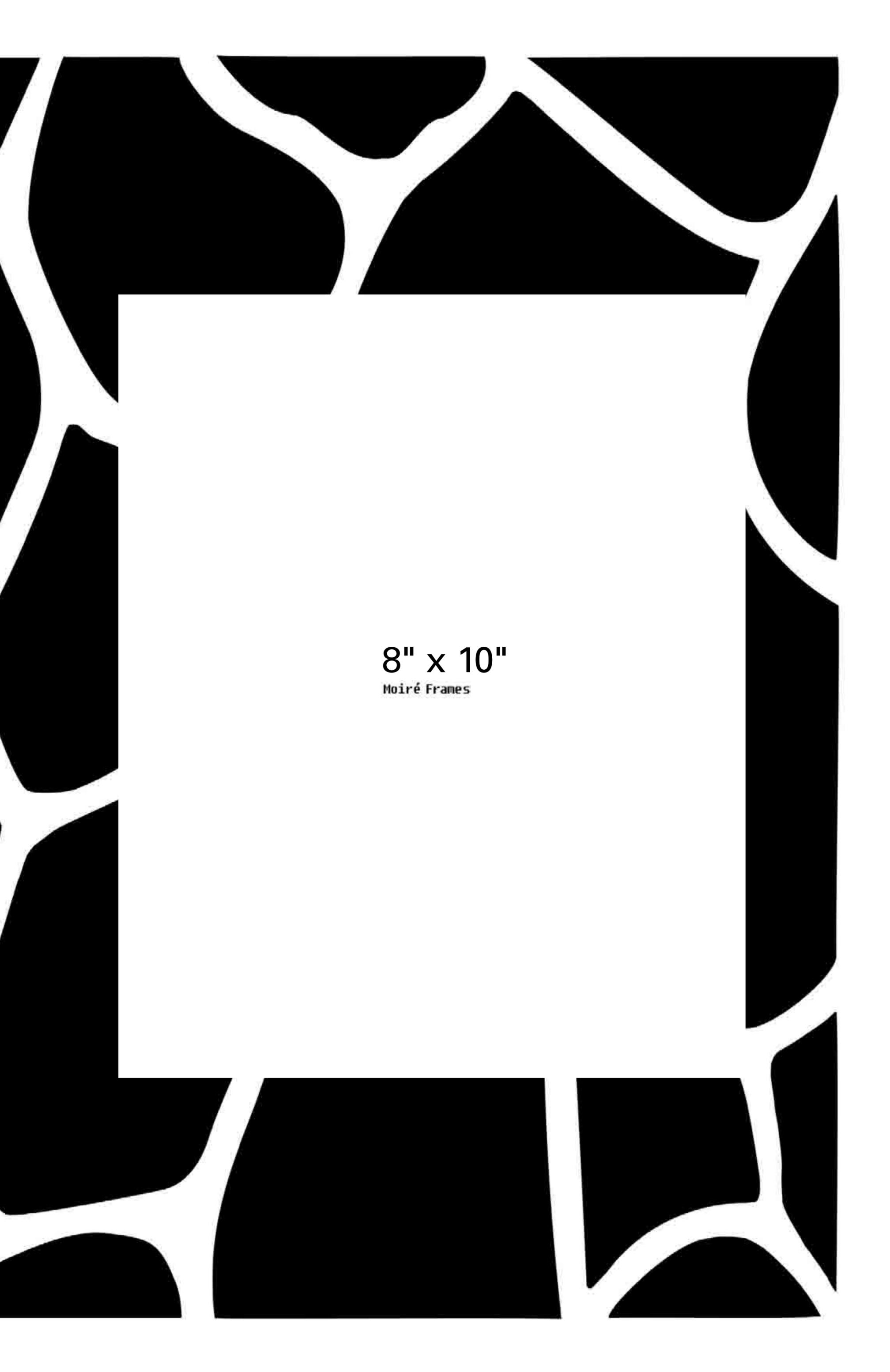
PO: There are things which will never be possible here such as green roofs...

NL: What about solar panels?

PO: Those can happen, if they are well attached. A solar panel is much more solid than a roof tile.

NL: So the aesthetics of housing did not change so much as being forced to stay the same?

PO: Yes, what really changed was structural. ■



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A searing examination of the hitherto unexplored relationships between Pan-African culture, science fiction, intergalactic travel and rapidly progressing computer technology.

Shopping Bag Spirits & Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual Space
Wednesday, November 17, 7pm

This experimental documentary depicts nine different artists who use ritual in their work to touch upon their cultural past.

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Wednesday, November 17, 7pm

An original and visionary work, this film references ancient rituals as a young woman performs a purification rite in a crumbling urban setting.

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(thirteen ways to look at a landscape nursery/ gean moreno/ ernesto oroza)

Florida bankers were willing to launder money. The rhythm of the horses' success and failure has an obvious historical dimension.

Today, the horses' place is occupied by lions and elephants, Virgins and fish-mailboxes. The struggle for survival between manatees and crocodiles, between monkeys and flamingos, between gnomes and syncretic saints are recorded in the nursery owner's Quickbook files and wherever he logs--perhaps only in his head--all the off-the-books sales. It's also registered in the workshops that are often found behind the nurseries. There, hanging from the rafters, like desiccated and fossilized specimens, are all the molds for the species that have been "rejected." As in the natural world, the conditions of selection are spontaneous and differentiated, intertwined with a larger mesh of forces and flows.

9. Extinction is also caused by mistakes or oversights in production. The cement elephant, attempting to double its referent's real proportions or at least to be large enough to suggest its massiveness, has made its own transportation to surrounding architectural spaces impossible. Therefore, it is inevitable that if its size and weight are not reduced the species will vanish. Smaller elephants, aided by interchangeable trunks that allow them to function as mailboxes, planters or statues--the choice is left to the client--are more successful, if we judge from the amount of them that are stocked in the nurseries. The lions are obviously even more successful than the small elephants. It is not only the number of them that are kept in stock that allow this conclusion, but the very diversity of shapes that they come in. There are Aztec lions, Sumerian lions, hyper-realist lions, fierce lions, subservient lions, lions that are only heads, lions that are only paws. There are lions of every shape, of various materials, and produced for different uses.

10. Architecture (architects) look upon the spaces of the pre-city with distrust, if they look at them at all. They prefer to cast their glance on the settled repertoire of dwelling spaces and ways of generating urban texture that archeology and history vouch for. The present is a blind-spot, a Risk Zone not worth entering. What happens with the pre-city is that a certain inexorability, a moral and ideological de-structuring, threatens what, according to design disciplines, the city should be--and how it comes about. There is also and above all else, a disparaging of the pre-city because, as it takes the dimensions and momentum of an irrupting force, it obligates the city to accommodate an impressive range of "non-designed" objects, or objects designed perhaps by engineers, or by "degraded" commercial artists, by artisans, or simply by small business owners. The producers of elephant-mailboxes, decorative horses, and the prides of cement lions that roam in landscape nurseries, among the rows of palms and gardenias, are not designers--neither identified as such by the field nor self-identified in this way. Their economic concerns foreclose on the vanity of such designations. And this, of course, only underscores the fact that a whole range of economies that once functioned parallel to the design world now cuts into it, and that a series of products that violate the designer's value system are gaining prominence. All of a sudden, the subjective differentiation of a designer's signature language ceases to be important; the matrix of institutions that legitimize and mediate designed products is relegated to a negligible role; exercises in advancing certain discursive lines take on a marvelously solipsistic character. This realm of the "non-designed" that is at the center of the pre-city, once a distant province past the lip of design's main concerns, where only mavericks trekked looking for the elixir of reinvigoration, has become what should currently be the field's most pressing object of analysis.

11. It has to be recognized that "non-professionals" put in the world more objects than individuals educated in design schools and universities. This



has tangible repercussions: behind the camera flashes, pristine pedestals, and reams of text that weave a protective web around designer artifacts, the real world is being determined by the morphologies that non-professionals generate in their businesses and workshops. Zurich penthouses and cleverly structured design museums in the German countryside may be repositories for objects that embody the latest advances in design

that have the greatest acceptance in projects of exterior ambiance production and in domestic spaces. Which is to say that the decorative, understood as a system of aesthetic values linked to a particular social group, puts its own demands to the natural in the nursery. A completely artificial value system, in a very consistent and concrete way, has verifiable impact on the natural world. A process no different from the one which intervenes in dog breeding. It is here where one can see how talk of boutiques and greenery easily trumps any reference to the natural. But, at the same, natural conditions inevitably continue to determine certain limitations or thresholds for plant production in the nursery.

The decorative threshold in the nurseries, for instance, is framed by a climatic threshold. The physiognomy, color, size, and texture of the plants that clients take home and to other spaces exist within a threshold that, although broad, is determined by a rigid climatic frame. There are plants that simply won't survive in the local climate. But nursery workers push against the limitations imposed by this fact. They work at opening the spectrum to include plant families from a large geographical zone. It's as if the geography of the nursery opened up radially, extending rings that surpass the local area and its climate. As the climatic threshold extends, the decorative functions that the nursery delivers stretch. Temperatures in Miami are extremely challenging for certain non-tropical species, but the nursery seeks to overcome their vulnerability by establishing adaptive microclimates. And these localized microclimates become extended artificial climate zones in urban agricultural culture. The use of ambient control systems, namely air conditioning, in domestic,



thinking, but house after house after house, block after block after block, neighborhood after neighborhood after neighborhood in Miami--and Miami is here but a stand-in for a prevailing urban typology--has the same faux-stone with the house numbers on it, the same jasmine hedge, the same manatee-shaped mailbox, the same panting pouch. At some point, these things that comprise the world we inhabit have to cease being seen as secondary to the "real" advances in object thinking. At some point, what is around us has to be treated as *what is*, as what structures the spaces we inhabit and use and the modes of living that we can forge.

12. The plant nursery basically operates as an agricultural producer. The species cultivated there are the ones

public, corporate and automotive spaces create a continuum of 68-75 degrees Fahrenheit. This core of controlled temperature, a kind of zone of reprieve surrounded by much more intense tropical weather most of the year, has marked repercussions in decorative practices that employ vegetation. In fact, this cooler core can be said to create space for a second artificial landscape for the city that exists parallel to the one made exclusively of native trees and imported species that have found ways to adapt easily.

13. The processes of plant production in nurseries enables a temporal relationship that, in comparison to static--and let's say more permanent--merchandise, such as cement and stone, is quite significant. Arecas,

reared in nurseries, transferred from a 2 gallon bucket to a 7 gallon bucket when they mature, can be said to have lived, as merchandise, a temporal span of waiting that is exclusive to living things. To think of merchandise that changes as it awaits someone to buy it is disquieting. It unearths an animate spirit in what, shelved and stacked, we take to be the ultimate inanimate thing--the commodity that should lie there, inert, only to seduce us and reflect our desires. A return of the dead. The idea of living merchandise sounds like an allusion to some sci-fi scenario, but beneath the surface it also calls up the orphanage, in which living creatures sit around waiting to be selected, fearing that point at which they "spoil" and are no longer attractive. Perhaps we should focus on the figure that marries both sites, and which shares in the fundamental logic of the nursery--the *fantasy or post-apocalyptic orphanage* in which individuals are produced as a way to harvest organs and body parts that aren't self-regenerating in human beings. Perhaps the uneasiness generated by living merchandise finds its genesis in the static nature and still precarious character of our productive capacities, and in the fledgling narratives of a unified identity that we tell about ourselves and our cities. The fantasy of the morphing product that the future of design and industrial production will find when they converge with genetic engineering, already lurking in the popular imagination, may just be a counterpoint to our own fragility and the fragility of our arrangements of the world.

Colophon. The pre-city is the beginning of a process that ends--as a post-city--with the salvage yard and the souvenir. (See "Thirteen Ways to Look at a Salvage Yard" in *Tabloid No. 8*) The pre-city seems the geometric and conceptual model for the post-city. The two make a kind of Rorschach inkblot, with the city as an unstable interstice between the two, reflecting sides. There has never been an architectural prophesy quite so precise. It should be the envy of all the radical Italian prophets of the *No Stop City* and the *Continuous Monument*. Home Depot and the salvage yard are very similar not only in the topographic qualities produced by the descriptive architecture of the warehouse-turned-retail-store, but in the sorting, stacking, segregating and other organizational logics that govern them. The symmetry that they articulate when considered side-by-side reduces the city to an axis of inflection. This description, of course, emanates from a reading of the city as an inalterable sequence of birth, life and death, where there is still some sense in using the terms *pre* and *post* as descriptive of that dramatic geometry.

But maybe we are not attending to how this order of the urban grows messy, non-linear, unstable: reversals, declines and interruptions are more common events in our city than the ideal sequences of progress. The space of *pre* and *post* no longer stay put. They shift, invade, and challenge the adjacent, supposedly autonomous, spaces of the home, the corporate lobby, public space, etc. Perhaps the ideas, diagrams and methodologies that from the academic spaces seek to promote a human relation that is satisfactory and synchronic with objects are crumbling on their own. New theorems are needed. Sentences such as "the death of the object" or "the life cycle of the object" are now dysfunctional metaphors that verge on sentimentality and obsolescence. They have perished faster than the objects and processes they describe. The de-hierarchization of domestic spaces, for instance, in relation to spaces of production and waste, has drained the symbolic value that placed at the climax of the cycle not only the home and objects of consumption, but also the human rituals of satisfaction nested at the core of discourses that revolved around the notion of habitat and the modern city. ■

