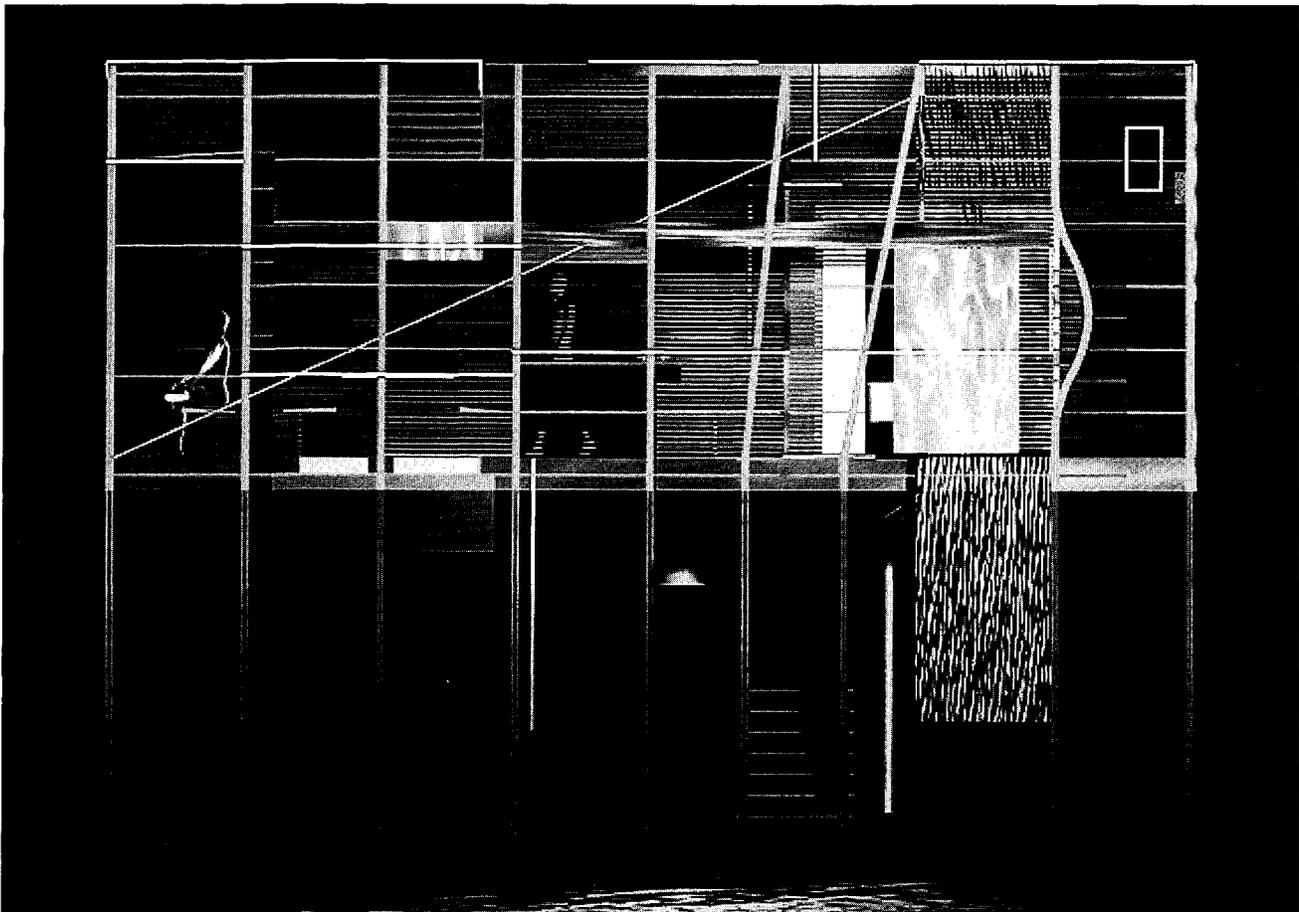


Coincidence: An Architecture of Indiscretion

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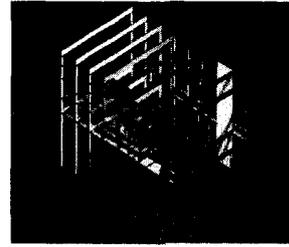
Throughout the twentieth century, architecture has aggressively engaged what might be called a 'culture of the distinct.' Prior to World War II, the articulation of distinctions among and within formal, programmatic, technical, or historical concerns played a key role in the development of the International Style. Ideologically as well as functionally, such distinctions fueled the *machine a habiter's* journey toward an efficiently revolutionary future. If the pre-war years produced a finely tuned machine, the post-war counter-culture rummaged through the scarpard of architectural ideology to create a Rube Goldbergian architecture of "messy vitality." This counter-culture opposed the exclusive nature of modern

subjectivity with an inclusive architecture that sought "room for the fragment, for contradiction, for improvisation and for the tensions these produce" (Venturi). While this younger generation confronted the tidy precision of high modernism, their critical strategies remained as beholden as their pre-war colleagues' work was to the articulation of clearly identifiable elements. Having succeeded in exploding the reified monolith of modernism, these critiques ultimately left in their wake an exacerbated form of pre-war "elementalization." This, in turn, has led to a frenzied proliferation of increasingly dilute architectural sub-conditions that are no longer effective as determinants of either formal or critical strategies.

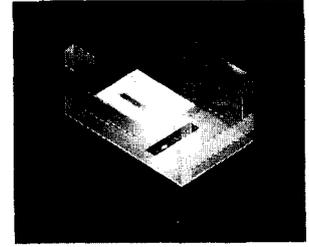
INDISCRETE ENTANGLEMENTS

The Guest House project explores an *indiscrete* architecture in which the normally identifiable elements of an architectural assembly -- the discrete conditions of program, skin, form, structure, and mechanical systems -- form recombinant relationships that exploit and expose their interdependencies. A six-sided glass box wraps an inner skin made entirely of operable, opaque louvers. The project's single space encloses a six room program. Wall cavities are simultaneously mechanical ducts; the bed doubles as a floor. The sub-elements of the supporting program -- sinks, a water closet, storage, ducts, a desk, and seating -- are located within the structural zone of one of the long walls. Unlike functional expressionism, where walls simply serve as signs of greater complexities within, this wall is formed by a complex and ongoing dialogue: columns and beams respond to the exigencies of program, and program adapts to the obligations of structure and skin. At a small scale, the Guest House explores the implications of *indiscretion*, *inflection*, and *interdependency* for a specific building; at a larger scale, it exemplifies the potential of an architecture of coincidence for numerous other building types or even urbanism.

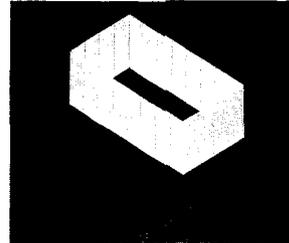
The project questions the assertion that "simply in order to live and act, we are obliged to disentangle, digest and classify both thought and things, and compelled to award identification marks to the manifestations which surround us" (Rowe). This need to disentangle has pushed architectural production through the successive sieves of disciplinary, technical, and ideological specialization. Carried out to its "logical" conclusion, this granulation of the modern project has created a phase shift of sorts: the discrete element has been transformed from the bearer of an indisputable truth to a fragment of an indeterminate potential. It is within the overlap of these two extremes — indisputability and indeterminacy — that an architecture of coincidence exists. Yoked together by a complicitous relativism, the force of a coincident architecture lies in the success of its synthetic conjunction, in the fact that its architectural elements are united by their inflections toward one another. By allowing *either-or* and *both-and* to coincide, the Guest House project explores the possibility of an architecture of *either-both*.



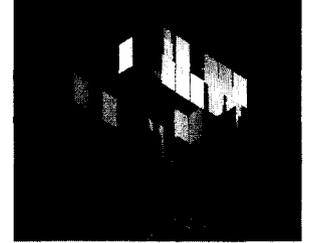
Structure



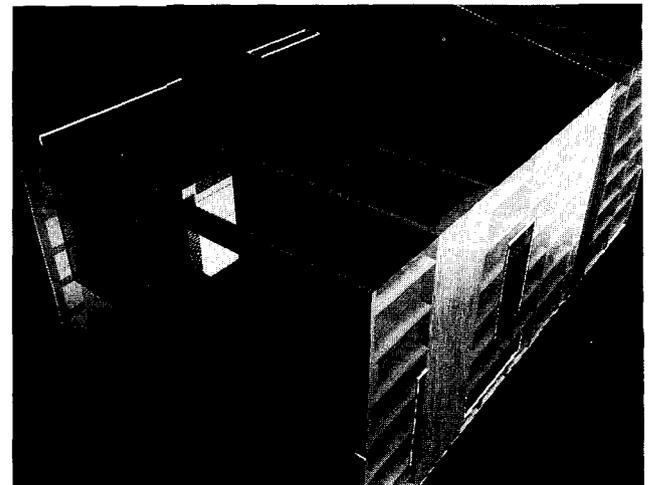
Glass



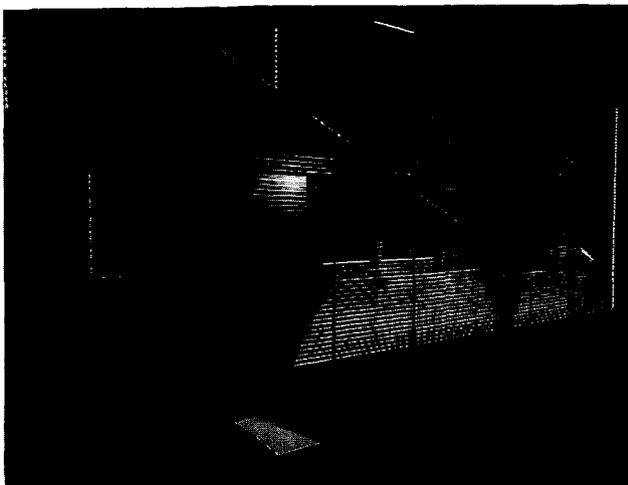
Louver Skin—Opaque



Louver Skin—Semi-transparent



Aerial Perspective



Interior Perspective



Perspective