

Boundary Studies

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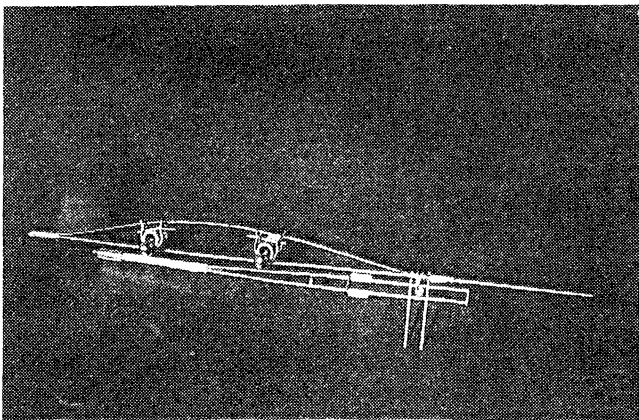


Fig. 1. Prosthetic; Portia Elmer

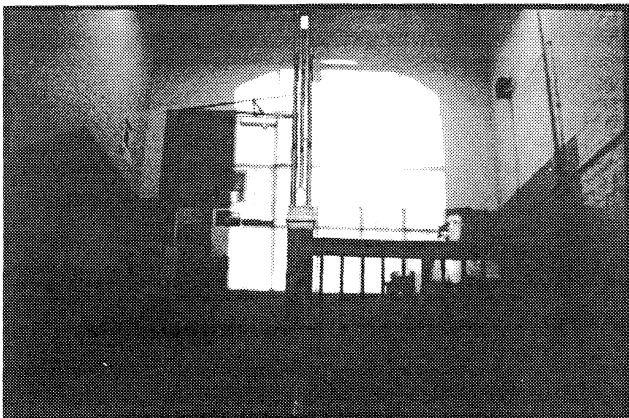


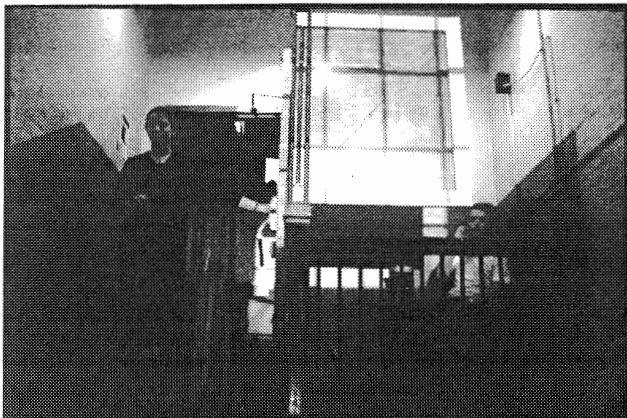
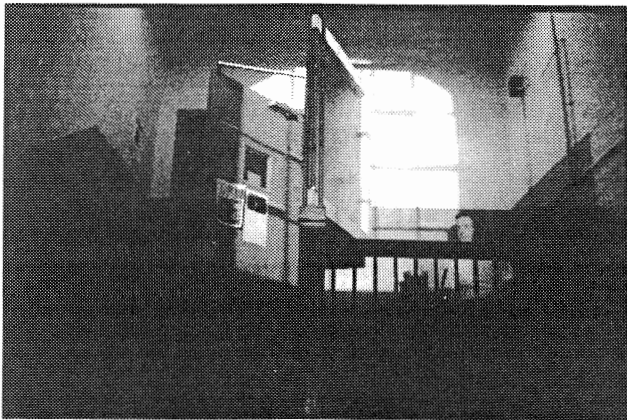
Fig. 2. Studio Screen; Eugene Colberg, Jordi Mack

CONSTRUCTION AND POLITY

One of the intents of this third-year, undergraduate studio was to bring to the student's formal awareness the temporal, phenomenal, and political forms elaborated in and by built environments. Programming and planning—the choice and juxtaposition of human acts, and the choreography of how those acts would be carried out/framed/illuminated—were revisited as two architectural “effects” of the latter kind.

In the studio environment, scaled representation tends to foreground organizational or compositional issues, which address the artefact nature architectural work and treat of it as a simultaneous presence. The concern for formal ideation—for the structural dimension of architecture—was not itself at issue. The implicit question was rather whether the experience of architecture as practical situations that are inhabited and inflected by gendered, cultured bodies appears adequately in these representational frameworks.

The use of full-scale construction sought to force this issue in two ways: by making the students' own bodies and quotidian environments the sites and ‘programs’ of their work; and more surreptitiously, by having the students live with their completed projects as the term continues with drawn, scaled projects. In retrospect, it was this latter, quotidian engagement with their works—a process wherein a spectacular, aestheticized and concept-burdened project fades into background, reemerges in unforeseen ways, or simply becomes a source of irritation—which offered the most valuable opportunity for instruction.



PROJECT 1 - PROSTHESIS

The construction of a body-prosthesis which would intercept a privileged use of sight in the navigation of a social milieu.

PROJECT 2 - STUDIO SCREEN

An extrapolation of a Prosthesis into a proposal for a boundary which would articulate/stage a relationship between two partners, or between the studio group and the other neighboring studio(s).

PROJECT 3 - DOMESTIC ENCOUNTERS

The development of the spatial and programmatic implications of one Screen for a domestic setting—a very small loft for two relative strangers.

PROJECT 4 - URBAN EXCHANGES

Proposal of a venue and situation for “cultural exchange” between urban strangers. Beginning with the site and skeletal program of the 1996 Van Alen competition, students were asked to elaborate an interpretation of “culture” and “exchange” in the context of the transforming Wall Street area of New York City.

Fig. 3. Domestic Encounters; Javier Arbona

