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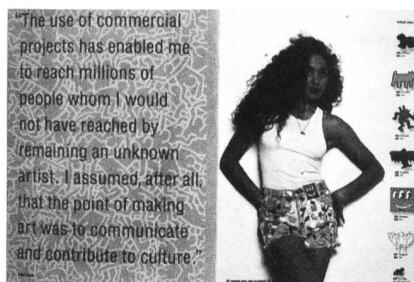
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*„Everybody experiences far more than he understands. Yet it is experience, rather than understanding, that influences behavior.“*

*(Marshall McLuhan)*

McLuhan is right. Experience affects behavior. But as our perception of the world around us are challenged and evolve we must continually ask: What should these experiences be?<sup>1</sup>

Anna Klingmann



<sup>1</sup> The cover and representative pages of a mail order catalog for the Pop Shop, created by Keith Haring, 1991

<sup>2</sup> Benetton Press Advertising, Oliviero Toscani

## Architecture as a Product

The architectural product goes beyond the architectural object to create new experiences. Experience in this sense is not what simply happens to you, but like with any other product, is consciously created. Architecture brought into the concurrent context of marketing becomes a complex manifold of myth, identification and effect. “Architecture as a product” is shaped by the cross roads of opportunity created by the global collision of markets, media, culture and technology. Within these interdisciplinary parameters, I want to examine the iconic identity of Nike as a prototype for integrated project development and innovation, the universal power of metaphor and myth in Disney architecture, as well as the merits of the non-critical shopping experience in the works of Jerde Partnership. In all instances the spontaneity of communication and experience is assimilated into the making of an architectural product. The perceptual specificity of the effect in conjunction with the universal communication of myth are examined as possible generators for the architectural design process. It is only through the immediacy of the psychological *effect*, expanded by the iconic quality of myth, that architecture can begin to transcend its object status into the orchestration of a truly integrated experience. Only through the connective tissue of myth and metaphor can architecture eventually begin to transcend site specific requirements (*genius loci*) to articulate the dispositions of designated (trans-national) target groups in order to shape a positively global experience.

### The Nike Experience

Due to an extensive demystification of the western hemisphere, societies are experiencing an exponential growth of insecurity, leading to a greater need for new models. The dissolution of cultural value systems proliferates new lifestyle concepts and a global transformation of spiritual desires. It is precisely within classless societies that signals of identification take on a critical importance. In a world in which continual change and movement replaces static social, economic, and political statements, every individual must for himself create his own identity and find ways of signaling their position. Spiritual values and lifestyles, formerly defined by religion and cultural differences are increasingly transferred to the marketing of products.

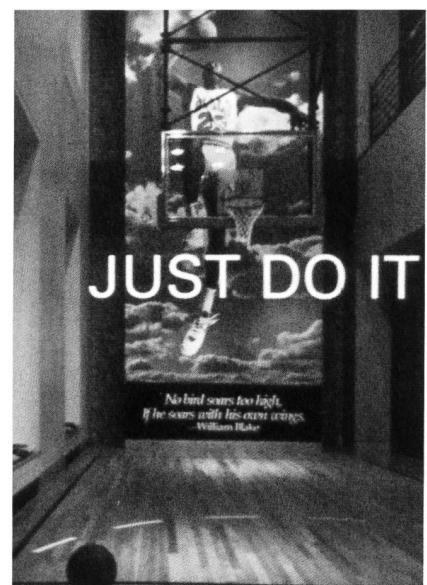
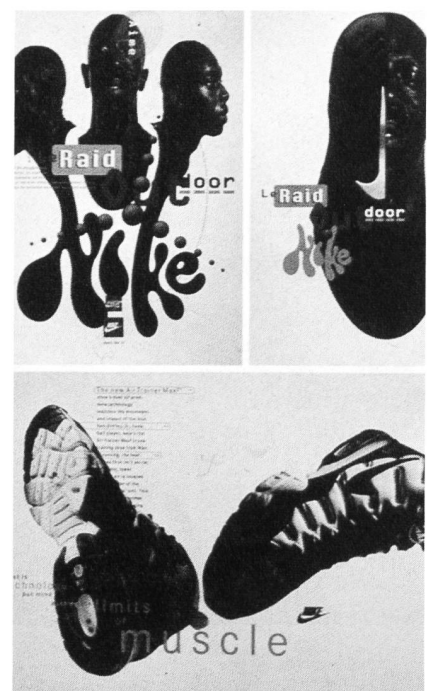
Marketing entails the synthesis of (product-) characteristics, use, and emotional values. It is vital that in this process both the target group and the product are taken into account. Following the exigency of the consumer market, this alliance of product development and marketing results in the manifestation of new icons signaling the possibility of new life-style concepts: Advertising today no longer depicts product value but

furthermore expends new means of identification. “Added Value”, the latest in marketing, originates from wrapping the product in multiple layers of story, myth and service.

Nike has become a prototypical example for an iconic product, aligning marketing, product innovation and corporate identity into a holistic ‘Nike experience’. The constant innovation of the product (a new line of shoes is marketed every 8 weeks) is successfully compounded with the myth of eternal youth. Unlike a lot of contemporary architecture, still ridden by notions of critical distance, Nike joins the psychological gap between product and client, forming an interactive consumer experience. Nike is not a critical object. Its presence will not change the world nor does it want to. While architecture even today is obsessed by a deterministic rigor and moral principles to ‘educate’ an ‘ignorant’ public, products have long since developed a far more fluid strategy operated by one principle only: that is seduction. Iconic products present enigmas protecting their sense against interpretation.<sup>2</sup> There is nothing necessarily intrinsic about an icon. The Nike sneaker is an ergonomic object that is shaped as much by our bodies as by the technology inside it. How it looks and feels is what matters. Aside from its emotional appeal it is loaded with associations. Nike has become a repository of multiple meanings such as freedom and uprising. The result is not a product or an image but both in one. It has become a universal symbol in material form.

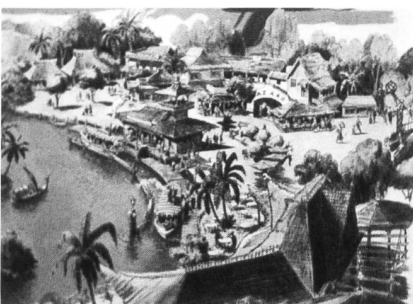
Aaron Betsky describes the icon as “an object of adoration and a fetish and in all of these ways it creates something we can see that condenses and makes the invisible or the unnamable forces physical that controls our world. (...) Icons are objects that represent the unrepresentable.”<sup>3</sup>

Engineers, designers and advertising specialists together style this object. The iconic quality of Nike is not marked by uniqueness but is achieved by mechanisms of standardization. The standardized aspect of the icon also creates what stands for a kind of community. We recognize those who share interests and tastes with us around the globe through the icons they wear and use. Consumption has long been an expression of attitudes and of group affiliation. Nike is not Reebok is not Adidas. The aim is not to buy sneakers but membership to a particular clan. An icon designates equally the differentiation from and the belonging to a particular community. As mass-produced objects icons have to appeal to a wide variety of tastes. Nike’s generic prototypes abide to intensive consumer testing distilling the latest trends in order to meet the particular needs of a targeted community. Because they have become such intrinsic parts of our commodity culture, icons virtually seem to disappear. “Icons are worth looking at, not because they are unique but because they are commonplace”.<sup>4</sup>



3 Advertisement for Nike Air Max Shoes, '94

4 Nike Town, interior by Nike Design



Another emblematic feature of icons is their inherent ability to communicate. Icons do not have a specific meaning but condense into a visible form a much larger idea. Whatever has no direct context is communicated through an icon, creating multiple layers of language that neither explain nor denote an object but puts it into a richer more allusive form. Nike proliferates new means of identification that are no longer bound by the specificities of culture, tradition or location. It constitutes a complex manifold of experience, lifestyle and effect. According to Betsky "icons are the honed-down, perfected results of complicated manufacturing, distribution and advertising processes on a vast and unknowable scale....they are the whole artificial universe we have created for ourselves made into one simple object."

### Disney : architecture with a plot

Disneyland a myth in its own right was initially inspired by Hollywood as the 20th century Mythopolis. The movie theater has always been a powerful device for manifesting the collective dreams of American culture, a tool for "the mythical suspension of disbelief from the conventions of everyday life."<sup>5</sup> Disney lifted this principle out of the cinema and with the creation of Disneyland into the sunlight of Southern California. As Jon Jerde puts it: "With Disneyland he created a threshold where the interpenetration of psyche and environment, of fantasy and reality becomes a unique experiential component of participatory entertainment."<sup>6</sup> The audience commingles with the entertainment, affecting plot, outcome and scenario.

Disneyland, the magic kingdom seems to embody the very structure of myth, employing fables and fairy tales from the depths of American consciousness: tree houses, haunted mansions, mountains as well as the ideal of a 1950's main street. On a deeper level it manifests the theme of justice equality and humanity a reoccurring myth, not only in the animated world of Disney but in American society at large. The use of symbolic forms are used to consolidate a collective identity, exhilarating a feeling of social interaction and togetherness.

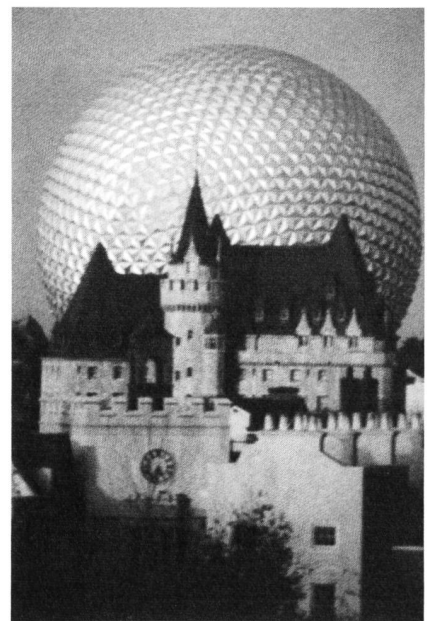
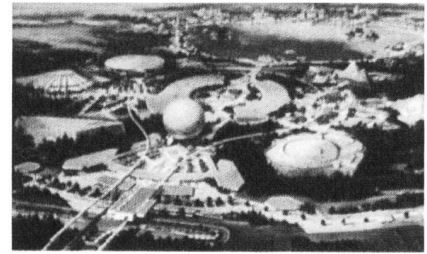
Michael Eisner the late chairman of Disney saw the potential of architecture as an important medium to communicate both myth and metaphor. "When myth becomes the inspiration for architecture, almost anything becomes possible."<sup>7</sup> On the other side Disneyland was often criticized for its thematic underpinnings, sentimental architecture, and idealized main streets, reducing myth to the collective imagination of the middle class. According to Vincent Scully "it was the idea of the theme, of the Theme Park, that canonical modernist hated most about Disney

architecture. But then abstract modernism had always rejected narrative and symbolic recourses in architecture just as its pictorial models had rejected the notion of representation.”<sup>8</sup> Conventional and experimental at once, searching the authentic in the inauthentic and vice versa, Disney’s architecture curiously enough succeeded to combine a nostalgia for the past and an enthusiasm for the future.

Architecture ordinarily governed by principles of abstraction is not generally regarded as a viable medium for storytelling.<sup>9</sup> Yet this was precisely what Disney was after. “We’ve set out to prove that contemporary architects can be a part of story telling just as derivative architects are”. According to Rumm, Disney always approached architecture with the idea, that a point of view, a story goes beyond architecture. “Without the story, there’s nothing to test against, no frame of reference. A story is the only thing I know that puts everything in context that gives it a primary reason for being.” Setting out to prove that architecture doesn’t have to be ‘boring’, Disney sought to express the underacknowledged scenographic aspect of architecture as well as its symbolic dimension. Disneyland was never meant to be real but completely believable, a world of utopian ideals. A representation of visual harmony and psychological order, there are no jarring interruptions or intrusions making myth and legend a part of everyday life.

“Imagination is the model from which reality is created,” Disney said, transposing his cartoon sensibility from movie making to architecture. His theme parks however, are not strictly limited to the imaginary qualities of his movies, but more importantly incorporate many of the dramatic effects used in film. To quote Beth Dunlop: “Just like the movies, Disney’s architecture can be silly, sentimental or funny. (...) Disney architecture explores the cinematic possibilities of architecture of letting people step right into the story.”<sup>10</sup> Marling compares Disneyland with the short-attention span of television sensibility: “In the movies the experience is continuous and unbroken but in Disneyland it is discontinuous and episodic like watching television in the privacy of ones own home, each ride a four or five minute segment slotted in among snacks, trips to the rest room, and commercials in the form of souvenir euphoria. And it is always possible to change the channel.”<sup>11</sup>

In order to convey the pace and cadence of film in architecture, Disney adapted a lot of strategies typically used in motion pictures. There are long shots and close-ups, and carefully laid out sequences, as if they were scenes in a movie: Images materialize and fade, just like cinematic dissolves.<sup>12</sup> Everything is scaled like a set so that it looks just right. Perspectival views are created to exemplify a long shot in a movie. Since the focus of Disney is on the space *between* objects rather than on the



5 Visitors of Disneyland, California, 1950's

6 Low level aerial view of Adventureland: Design drawings at Disney were used as much to promote the theme park as to aid in the planning process.

7 A detailed rendering of Epcot (top) was prepared by Disney's Imagineering Division before construction commenced. The theme park, seen in an aerial view, taken 1982, (above) is remarkably true to the original conception.

8 Disney adapted a lot of strategies typically used in motion pictures. There are carefully laid out sight lines, that determine the exact placement of buildings in relation to one another. Everything is scaled like a set to look just right. Here the 'Hotel du Canada' is set off, in an almost surreal way, by the giant Spaceship Earth.



9 CityWalk, Universal Studios, Los Angeles by Jerde Partnership, 1993

10 The communal experience: Water-splashing at Center Court, CityWalk

objects themselves most of the designers come from the field of motion pictures. Unlike architecture where the object is self-referential Disney is an environment designed for activity. This notion of movement also translates into the design strategy of the 'Imagineering Department'. Disney projects his architecture with the help of elaborately rendered perspectives supplemented by sequential story boards.

Disney's architecture communicates on a multitude of levels, from the overt to the subconscious. It works on the emotions first and later on the intellect. It affects us subliminally first and then much later we begin to perceive its more obvious attributes. Disney was convinced that it is the *experience* of architecture that takes hold of us, the fiction of it not the fact.<sup>13</sup> A good example is 'Splash Mountain' based on the feature film 'Song of the South'. The experience is as much visceral as visual: the ride through this structure appeals to all senses within a few minutes. With the use of bright colors, music and mysterious noises. 'Splash Mountain' activates the collection of images and sensations that constitute a part of a collective memory. People wait up to one hour for this ride which according to Beth Dunlop provides a critical insight into the essence of Disney's architecture, to the way "it speaks directly to the subconscious mind".<sup>14</sup> Disney developed an acute insight of his audience forever identifying with their innermost desires. It was this keen perception coupled with his astute ability to communicate that in fact enabled him to sell his ideas. Knowing his audience, he grasped the need for a clear strong visual message: he would tell the imagineers in charge of the park scheme that if people didn't understand what they were saying, it could only be because of poor design. Marty Sklar who started working with Disney as a college student and who later became president of the Disney Imagineering Division, eventually issued 'Mickey's 10 commandments', an outline for making architecture a more humanitarian experience: "Know your audience; wear your guests' shoes, that is, don't forget the human factor; organize the flow of people and ideas; create a 'winnie' (attractor or visual magnet); communicate with visual literacy; avoid overload, but create turn ons; tell one story at a time; avoid contradictions, but maintain identity; for every ounce of treatment provide a ton of treat; and most importantly: keep it up."<sup>15</sup>

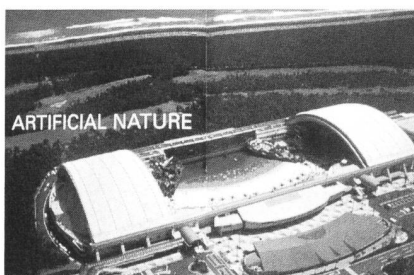
### **Jerde Partnership: reinventing the communal experience**

"From the American suburb came an entirely new drive-in culture: the tract house, the drive-in movie, the drive-in restaurant, the strip-shopping center, the regional shopping center, the office park. Pedestrian zones, like the downtowns, town squares, districts and neighborhoods of the

American cities were compromised by an environment where notions of progress and desirable newness were celebrated by prevailing values of convenience, simplicity and privatization. The cohesive and complex layering of the traditional city gave way to suburbia, to linear experiences of unrelated objects and segregated uses. (...) In many ways the most important loss was an experiential one.”<sup>16</sup>

Face to face with the legacy of modernist planning, Jerde Partnership resolved to appease the cultural demand for newness and convenience by using a more perceptual design strategy appealing to sense and emotion. Alerted by the pitfalls of privatization such as use segregation and prototypal construction, Jerde’s goal was to restore a sense of urban community exploring the potential of mixed use developments. Programs of diverse use were contextualized to energize, invigorate and entertain a new sense of communal belonging. With a fresh focus on cultural, phenomenological and social essences Jerde Partnership set out to battle modernist monotony. Jerde’s research began by isolating issues of experiential time, compacting the phenomenological issues of space, light, form and texture. These sensory notions combined with issues of use, mood, vitality and geography produced a new concept of ‘Experiential Design’. As opposed to object making, urban design, planning and landscape design, ‘Experiential Design’ sees all these disciplines linked as integrated informants. In opposition to 20th century architecture standing as isolated self-fulfilled expositions in competition with their adjacencies, Experiential Design seeks to instigate a process of perpetual change. Consequently the architecture is never really finalized but is conceived as a transient basis for further metamorphosis and revisions by people inhabiting these places.

Like Disney, Jerde came to recognize that people relate to their environments in an intuitive and spiritual way. Contrary to Disney’s theme parks however, Jerde orchestrates an experience of intense heterogeneity to the point where *no theme* is the theme. Buildings to Jerde are always part of a larger experience. Inspired by the sensual textures of Italian hill towns he came to identify with the urban fabric as a “composition of humans in time where the communal is simultaneously the creator and the audience”. Buildings in this respect become visceral blocks of identity and accordingly can never be designed “by one single genius”. (Jerde) Consequently Jerde Partnership is no longer engaged in the production of the ‘singular object’ but on the contrary works on the incessant decomposition of its signature. Jerde: “When structures of this kind are brand new, they are ersatz because of their self conscious nature but as time goes on they blend into the fabric.”<sup>17</sup>



Jerde calls his office a body for “Placemaking and Experiential Design”. Along with its purpose to “fabricate rich experiential places that inspire and engage the human spirit” the office evolved a unique methodology of CoCreativity. This interdisciplinary teamwork approach involves the bringing together of people from a variety of disciplines with diverse talents and ideas in order to promote the same dynamic spirit so emblematic for his projects. A good example of how auspiciously this strategy was implemented is Horton Plaza in San Diego, CA. This large-scale development of 1.5 million square feet is an urban center of mixed use including 165 specialty shops and restaurants, four department stores, a multi-screen cinema, hotel, office space and an outdoor theater. With the intention of designing a pluralistic experience the project was broken down into six separate components: the key department stores, the transportation building, the southerly court and the market place. Each of these elements were assigned to a different design team, each being relatively blind to the others in order to create spontaneity and variance. Rather than exhibiting a distinguished theme the project became a collaged reflection of the city itself. Full of collisions, accidents and surprises it can not be read as a singular object but camouflages itself as part of a complex urban experience. Needless to say with the people from San Diego it was an enormous success right from the beginning.

Universal CityWalk is another illustration of ‘designed’ Placemaking. CityWalk which opened in May 1993 is a four block long mixed-use pedestrian promenade located in the vicinity of Universal Studios in Los Angeles. Conveying the image of LA as a conglomerate of different neighborhoods with distinct identities, Jerde’s goal was to set up an urban village community, an enclave for people to get together and enjoy themselves. Even though CityWalk is only a short strip in actual distance it accommodates an unparalleled multiplicity of events. CityWalk amplifies the ephemeral quality of LA street life creating a bazaarlike atmosphere as it operates within constant elaboration of detail and perceptual change. Visual intensity is produced by small scale layering and an eclectic assortment of facades. Multiple layers of signs and art are added to the buildings including signs of motels that do not exist. This collage of visual stimuli amount to the lightness of a ‘Mediterranean vacation atmosphere’ evoking recreation and enjoyment.

Another significant aspect is the articulation of scale as a means to synthesize issues of identity and allegiance. A tight pedestrian scale relieved with selective perforations encourages effortless meandering through shops and venues creating a sense of liveliness and invigoration even at times, when the promenade is nearly deserted.

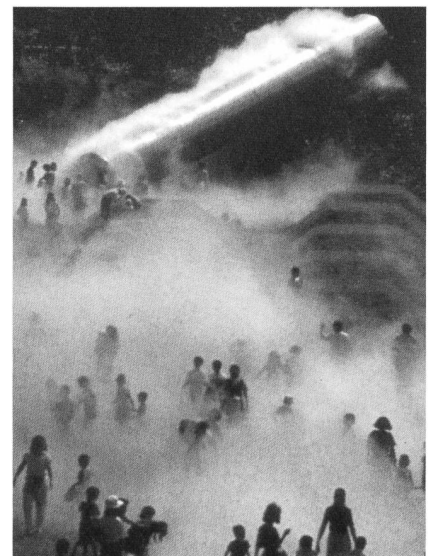
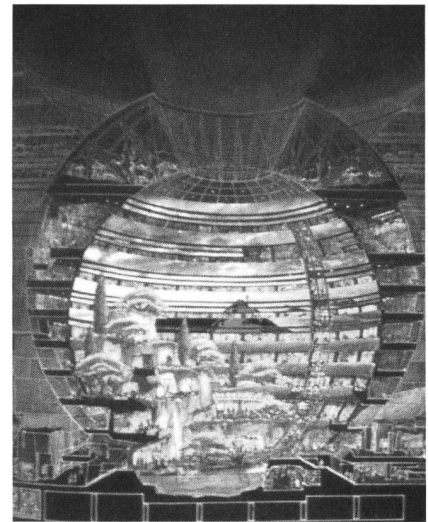
Like Disney, Jerde understands the vital importance of creating attractor-catalytic elements, that are dropped into an urban field to stimulate public participation. Acting as evocative 'Information Pieces', these attractors become part of an orchestrated script but yet always allowing sufficient flexibility to encourage interaction. With its manifold identity the MCA project seeks to communicate with a variegated audience: the family, the tourist, the non-specific citizen.

### More real than real: The new vacation experience

According to Jerde cyber society with limited sensory is yearning for a more integrated lifestyle a kind of 'super reality' where people feel safe, comfortable and happy.<sup>18</sup> Synthesizing the best remembrances from every holiday, man-made paradises of tropical nature promise to fulfill the ultimate desire for escape and recreation all within an affordable price range. Hermetically sealed the virtual implant of sunset, cocktail and coconut tree becomes a sensory reality. Inside the perfect world of 'Centerparks' (brand name) the synthetic experience is more intense, more exciting and also more real than the real experience.

The first radical example of this kind is the Ocean Dome in the Seagaia Resort, Japan, a controlled leisure environment in the middle of a natural sea and beach area just outside of Miyazaki. The Ocean Dome is the resort's main attraction and is known as the 'world's largest indoor all-weather water park'. The principle theme was to create a 21st century resort where humans, culture and nature could finally relate in harmony. Tightly secured from the 'wilderness' around it this man-made environment protects both humans inside and nature outside from each other. It is the artificial implant of a new synthetic nature into a natural environment. Technologically well advanced the structure of the Ocean Dome spans a gigantic roof that can be opened or closed in order to accommodate prevailing weather conditions. Just 800 meters away from the coastline the Ocean Dome hosts a vast indoor beach complete with turquoise sea water, blue sky and white sand. Not surprisingly, people prefer this 'designer-environment', complete with cocktails, exotic food and an everlasting blue sky to the unpredictable conditions of the shoreline right behind it. Blending the virtual image of the idiosyncratic beach experience with a sense of communal enjoyment the design is the experience, 24h a day.

Interesting examples of vacation parks in Europe include "Aqua Mundo" in Epherheide and the "Discovery Bay" in De Vossemeren, Belgium, both designed by Centerpark. The greatest advantage of these new resorts is that they are always within driving distance demanding no



11 Ocean Dome, Seagaia Resort, Japan 1994 by Phoenix Resort Ltd.

12 Discovery Dome, vacation park in De Vossemeren by Centerparks

13 'Paradise unter Glas', illustration by Helge Eicken as part of a critique in 'Die Zeit', 1998

14 Makuhari Town Center, shopping mall in Chiba, Japan by Jerde Partnership

15 illustration of a Centerpark catalog, 1997/98, available at local travel agencies

16 Fog Forest Park by Atsushi Kitagawa



17 Consumer Lifestyle magazine dedicated to the Sony brand, containing features and articles relating to Sony products as well as relevant lifestyle commentary. Magazine available at news-stands or by phone order.

18 Sony Tower by Kisho Kurokawa Sony has built several Sony Centers in Japan, and more recently, in the US and Europe. These interactive and engaging spaces provide a three-dimensional representation of the Sony brand within which the visitor may experience the Sony 'story'.

19 reprint from OMA's competition entry for the MoMA extension, 1997

20 Architectural plaque of the Citibank symbol, 1975

jet lag, no extended stay and hence leaving no time for conflicts to arise between family members. According to the latest marketing campaigns, 'they bring the most harmonious holiday experience back home'. Centerparks are usually positioned within natural surroundings. Correcting the cheerless nature of northern Europe with the addition of tropical phenomena they advance smoothly from the natural to the (super) natural.

Synthetic resorts are borne from the same concept as Vegas or Disney which is a shared sense of entertainment, and the collective celebration of 'fun culture'. All of these resorts carefully implement Jerde's strategy of 'Experiential Design' completing it with Disney's communication of metaphor and myth. Hence the event of (super-) natural phenomena are always linked to notions of adventure and ancient mythology. Centerparks proliferate cinematic effects of mystery, anticipation, unfolding and surprise. Sensory stimulation completed with sound, color- and scale manipulation perfected with the aid of multimedia entice the choice of multiple sensations. Swimming, diving and sunbathing seamlessly unite with the 'conquering of shipwrecks' or 'visits to the caves of Neptune'. Greek mythology and fairy tales coalesce with 'sober' sport activities to originate a sense of enterprise.

The Fog Forest Park by Atsushi Kitagawa, a man-made outdoor environment, also seeks to amplify the effects of natural phenomena. In his case natural effects of water are manipulated in a cinematic way to appear highly artificial. People meander among waterfalls and lakes, eventually vanishing between clouds of artificially produced mist. Its site amidst a 'natural' forest of pine trees even further alienates the question of what is real and what is artificial, drawing both constituents into a process of continuous transformation.<sup>19</sup>

## The CI model

For over a century architects have tried to save the notion of craft as a revelation of the true nature of materials. Only by stripping things down to their basic functions and then creating articulated compositions, their intention was to create forms that are true, honest and beautiful. Such objects always stood out as isolated fragments in an increasingly commodified environment. They became the very emblems of an avant-garde. Now perhaps the time has come to realize the possibilities of revelation within mass culture itself.

But what does that mean? Architecture needs to rethink its position as an integral constituent of contemporary social networks, that is, as a complex entity of globalized marketing forces, communications and design.

Architecture has already become part of a package, that may perhaps be described best by the idea of Corporate Identity – but even in order to secure its survival as a 'singular commodity' it needs to engage some of the interdisciplinary thought of marketing to that degree that it may compete with other products on the global market.

All of the introduced 'case studies' rely on strong marketing strategies to back their design concept. Centerparks as a new interdisciplinary product of marketing and architecture, for example prompts along with experiential design, a contemporaneous interpretation of tourism, successfully combining the strategy of catharsis (total escape) with affordability. While Disney succeeded to establish an entire empire based on his philosophy, complete with graphics, architecture and more recently urban design, Jerde's strategy of 'Placemaking' entails a keen mediation of investment strategies and consumer values. Evidently, an intimate pedestrian scale not only encourages effortless strolling and communal gathering but more importantly perhaps sales. Both Disney and Jerde have an acute insight into human value systems, explaining in many ways their

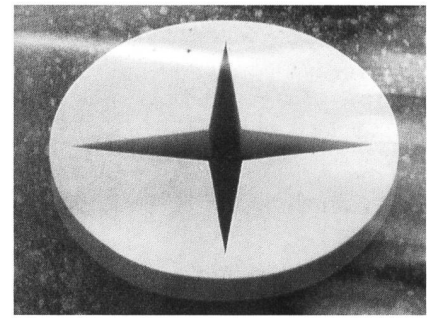
financial successes. In the end it comes down to a commercial strategy that blends social values with the strategic thought of finance.

Management by definition needs to respond to the transformations of social value systems. Within the field of Corporate Communications it has long become a recognized fact that emotional value systems intimately tied to notions of identity and identification have become substantial constituents of the global market place.<sup>20</sup> As a consequence corporations today compete with each other to signalize distinguished attitudes. In a time of immediate trend transmission it has become more essential than ever to establish a personalized identity. Corporate Identity is a holistic concept that serves to synthesize (corporate) goals with visual representation (image). Corporate Identity is the composite result of an intense communication process that takes place with investors and consumers but also with the public at large.

Recent developments in Corporate Identity prove just how important strategic communication has become. Sony no longer sells technologically advanced products but communicates an entire Sony life style. Relying solely on the intrinsic quality of the product, as is the case with many architectural firms, what no longer suffices to secure public interest. The Corporate Image of Sony does not only base on the product itself but is elaborated into a whole 'Sony personality' providing a distinguished setting for the product. 'Corporate Communications' serves to close the gap between the corporation and selected target groups in order to achieve a positive consumer attitude. In the case of Sony, the Corporate Identity is among other media conveyed through an extensive in-house publication containing features and articles relating to Sony products as well as relevant lifestyle commentary. Sony as well as Disney for that matter, no longer simply advertise a product but provide a distinct identity, an affixed meaning that is absolutely congruent with their corporate philosophy.

Rupert Lay defines communication as a "sequence of interactions, generating, transporting or transforming information, emotions, desires, interests and values."<sup>21</sup> Communication in this regard affirms an active goal oriented approach. As opposed to information communication is only brought about when the addressee understands the intended message. The conjecture behind this concept is that there is no such thing as an absolute reality. If we take the primary reality as objectively measurable, the secondary reality which is perhaps the more important one describes the meaning that we ascribe to certain situations. Reality is what we make of it; it is in fact the end result of successive communications that predicate preferred perceptions of reality. A congruent synthesis of these perceptions can only be achieved within the stratified processes of communication. Why is communication so important? All charismatic leaders use it without even being conscious of it. They understand their position primarily as communicators just like Walt Disney himself who once commented, that he used 80% of his time to convince others. Which architect however, uses 80% of his time for communications? Most architects are far too busy to communicate but taken aback by the fact that no one (except other architects) comprehends their intention. Typically they end up blaming the investors as well as the public for their supposed deficiency.

The model of Corporate Communication is first and foremost based on the aspiration to shape or change the beliefs of designated target groups. Corporate Communications transcends Corporate Design, the visual image integrates and uses communication to effect a change of public opinion. It synthesizes image, identity and corporate goals into a coherent entity while simultaneously codifying cultural values at large. Finally Corporate Identity entails the formulation of a vision. A vision is always situated somewhere between reality and utopia so that it can be simultaneously understood as a challenge but yet be recognized as an attainable goal. A vision in corporate terms is a clear statement reduced to its essences – a magnet of meaning.



1 quoted from Sean Perkins, Kate Tregoning,

'Experience', Booth Clibborn Editions, London 1995

2 see also Aaron Betsky, 'The Enigma of the Thigh Cho', in 'Icons: Magnets of Meaning', San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1997

3 Aaron Betsky, 'The Enigma of the Thigh Cho', in 'Icons: Magnets of Meaning', San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1997, pg. 23

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