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An/To: Ms. Debbie Taylor

Ort/Location: MOMA, Dept of Arch. N.Y.

Betrifft/Re: ewe

Datum, Zeit: 1988 04 11 19⁴⁰
Date, Time:

Mit der Bitte um: Kenntnisnahme/for your information
 Stellungnahme/for your comment
 Rücksprache/we ask you to contact us

Seitenanzahl inkl. Deckblatt 1
Number of pages incl. cover

Dear Debbie,

just an insurance for future doubts and/or typos.
It should be written:

ewe Küchen
Wels; Austria

Yours

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Oliver Gruenberg

Oliver Gruenberg

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An/To: Debbie Taylor

Ort/Location: MOMA Dept. of Architecture NY

Betrifft/Re: Deconstructivist Architecture

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Date, Time:

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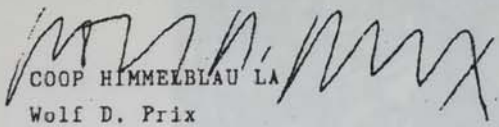
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Thank you very much


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PETER COOK Cities
PETER COOK & CHRISTINE HAWLEY Museum

Prologue

Suddenly he's disappeared from the revolutionary vanguard. Suddenly he turns up in the Establishment corner — in St James's. So we take the suit out of mothballs and head for the lights.

Fischer Fine Art Ltd display a long list of public collections which have purchased art works from them — British Museum, National Gallery, Tate Gallery. . . over a hundred well known institutions. And now they're showing his work, a selection of post-revolutionary projects, mainly *Die deutsche Section*. It's serious. Finally they've elevated him to Mount Olympus. But we know who he is.

Sentence I

PETER COOK IS PETER COOK IS PETER COOK.

Gertrude Stein told it to Ernest Hemingway in Paris when he was very young, and someone else had told it to her before, and this someone else may have been told it before: 'Write a true sentence.' For Gertrude Stein this true sentence was 'A rose is a rose is a rose.'

For me, when I start writing about Peter Cook, this true sentence can only be: Peter Cook is Peter Cook is Peter Cook. Because for Peter Cook himself there is only one true sentence: Architecture is me, Peter Cook. So is architecture. So is me. So is Peter Cook. Peter Cook lives architecture. He uses the world as an idea. As an idea of architecture. As an idea for architecture. He uses architecture as an idea. Ideas have to do with ideal conditions, and they work only *Unter idealen Verhältnissen*. But as Bertolt Brecht wrote in his true sentence: 'Die Verhältnisse, die sind nicht so!' In this world, in general.

Following this logic, there is only one kind of ideal conditions: self-imposed conditions. That's why anyone with an overwhelming *ego* like Peter Cook's must be like he is. That's what makes him so energetic, sometimes so convincing, and right for himself even if he is wrong. And he is right in the way that he is right:

Sentence II

PETER COOK IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ARCHITECTONIC DESIGNER OF THE SECOND HALF OF THIS CENTURY.

Peter Cook is to architecture what Andy Warhol was to art in the second half of the twentieth century. He is the *agent provocateur par excellence*. He is beyond questions of taste, construction, or any other existing limits. But he is not beyond moral limits. He takes architecture extremely seriously, more so than most. He is in love with architecture, which means he wants to do it *more*, not *less*. Andy Warhol showed us that art does not have to depend on subject, or technique, or the singularity of the work of art (yes, prophet Walter Benjamin). Peter Cook showed us that architecture does have to not depend on subject, or technique, or the singularity of the work of architecture (yes, prophet Konrad Wachsmann). Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, not to mention the younger generation of architects who design all those buildings with unnecessary suspended roof-constructions (as Alvin Boyarsky puts it), would have been unimaginable without the unbridled fantasies of Peter Cook and Archigram, whose combined energies affected us all.

- Peter Cook the experimenter.
- Peter Cook the designer.
- Peter Cook the writer.
- Peter Cook the teacher.
- Peter Cook the internationalist.
- Also Peter Cook the performer.
- But Peter Cook the builder?

Sentence III

THE PETER COOK THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

In 1972, on the occasion of the International Institute of Design Summer Session (directed by Alvin Boyarsky), Peter Cook gave a talk about Le Corbusier, 'The Corb that might have been' (published in *Architectural Design*, April 1972). I think he wrote it about *himself* — the way he would like to be,

and I will quote from it, but replacing the name Le Corbusier with the name Peter Cook:

What interests me is the difference between the Peter Cook that was rammed down our throats and the range of ideas that *can* be pulled out from the great range of his work. The critics have got between us and the Peter Cook *that might have been*. They have looked at a great inventor who was able, over a period of time, to repeat some of his inventions and have decided that there are certain formal and elemental aspects of his work which show such *consistency* of invention that they are observable and even repeatable rules for others. But this aspect of Peter Cook leaves aside his particular usefulness as an *inventor*.

return to the work in the exhibition, *Real City*. The Frankfurt scheme was the most extensively represented. It is very much influenced by Cook's desire Frankfurt' is the most extensively represented project. It is very much influenced by Peter Cook's wish to build. But, when you come to build, there are different conditions, especially in Germany — there are economic questions and regulations, as Peter Cook knows. And there is Frankfurt, which is very American, straightforward — a certain kind of brutal planning. I think he was influenced by Frankfurt. *Er bewundert Deutschland*. He can do it only from his position as an English person. If I think of the Peter Cook that might have been, the builder-architect Peter Cook, I begin to wish that Real City, like Le Corbusier's plan for Paris, might never be realized. I wish the entertainments tower for Montreal (1963) had been built, or the Sleek Building of the Sponge Project, or A Lantern from Secret Blue. Those designs would have had the same revolutionary impact on their surroundings as the drawings of them had on the vocabulary of architecture.

But he knows and we know: Building them would change so much, and we know that *Peter Cook is Peter Cook is Peter Cook*.

Pascal Schöningh

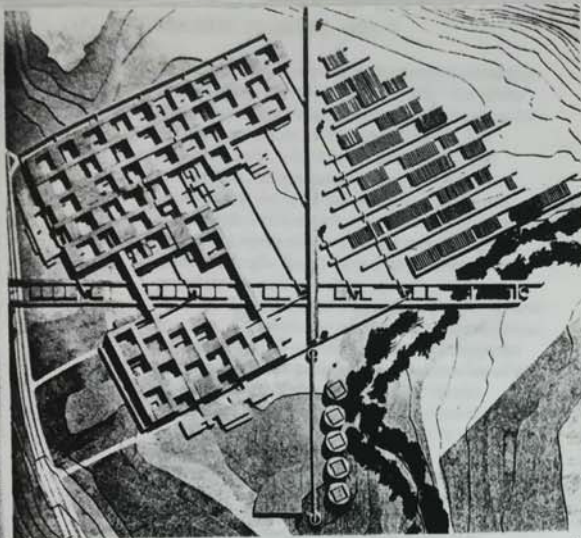
P.S. The collaboration of Peter Cook and Christine Hawley would require another, different essay.

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14

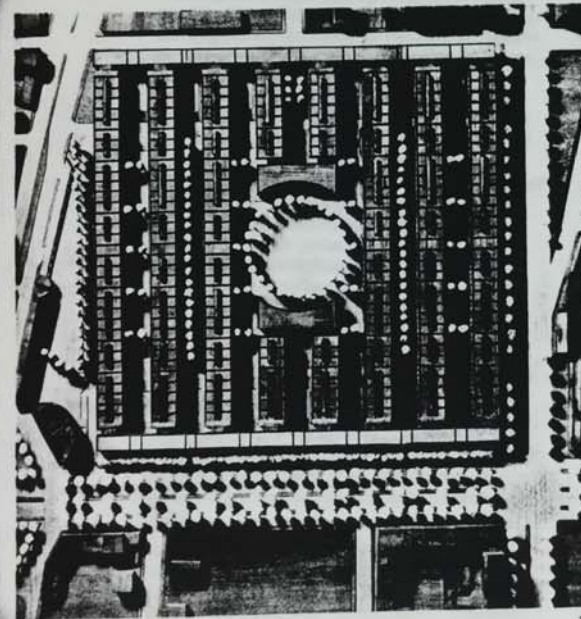


Real City, Frankfurt, 1986: Map of Oberrad/Offenbach. The overall plan suggests the setting of a series of parallel avenues running east-west that will link Frankfurt with Offenbach and Wiesbaden. The project was awarded joint first place in the 1986 'Los Angeles Prize' by the American Institute of Architects.

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37

35
Shadrach Woods
Free University of Berlin, West Berlin. 1963
Model

36
Mario Botta, with Tita Carloni, Aurelio
Galfetti, Flora Ruchat, and Luigi Snozzi
Lausanne Polytechnic Master Plan
Lausanne, Switzerland. 1970
Project: model

37
Mario Botta
Urban Housing, Turin, Italy. 1985
Model

but also space for future building expansion. A third zone of parallel linear laboratory spaces overlapped one edge of the grid.

Given the fact that the programs for Lausanne and Turin are quite different, one may still deduce a major shift in formal conception. What at Lausanne was a nonhierarchical network where activities might be plugged in flexibly has at Turin become a deliberate articulation of center with a clear commitment to an order and hierarchy in the location of building elements—where functions may change over time but the form provides a permanent order. And what at Lausanne was unarticulated open space has at Turin become the formal, circular public space located at the very center of the scheme.

While Turin is essentially a closed square and, as such, has almost classical order, it is not composed of traditional urban building types so popular in present-day urban design, but rather of Botta's own variation on modernist urban housing models. While the totality forms an enclosed superblock in plan, in elevation from the ground to the fourth floor the complex is open and permeable. It represents a fascinating and significant experiment in open and closed urban forms, and combines the creation of a sense of center with a modernist open flow of space.

Mario Botta developed as an architect immersed in the modern movement, but like others of his generation, he also became highly critical of how its ideals had been debased and exploited by commercial interests. Even more important, he has been able to approach critically the evolving ideology and theory of the modern movement itself. Unlike many of his colleagues, whose critiques of modernism have led them to abandon it altogether, Botta has continued to work within its context, transforming and revitalizing it in the process. The willingness to experiment, to push for new solutions and syntheses, not blindly but critically, characterizes Botta's work and is part of the legacy of the modernist tradition. As Botta himself has put it, "Building is a fundamentally productive activity; it presupposes a faith in man, in one's work, in the need to express oneself and to bear witness to one's own time in positive terms."

xerox: MOMA Botta catalogue

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SEASIDE, FLORIDA, 1985-7

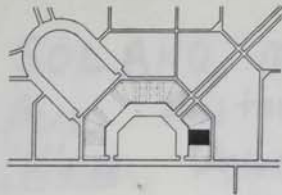
Seaside is a new town currently under construction on the Gulf of Mexico. The 75' x 100'-site of the 'hybrid building' faces a central square laid out by the planners, Duany and Plater-Zyberk. The planners' code, which has established height restrictions, design guidelines and easements, requires that the buildings on the square form a continuous public arcade around it. Beyond the square is a residential area so far containing only detached single-family houses organized along radial streets and secondary squares.

As the first urban building in Seaside, the 'hybrid building' — combining retail, office and residential accommodation — could become a prototype for subsequent development. The concentration of the disjointed programmes forms an incidental urbanism. Along with the intensification of an urban condition, we propose a formation of 'a society of strangers'.

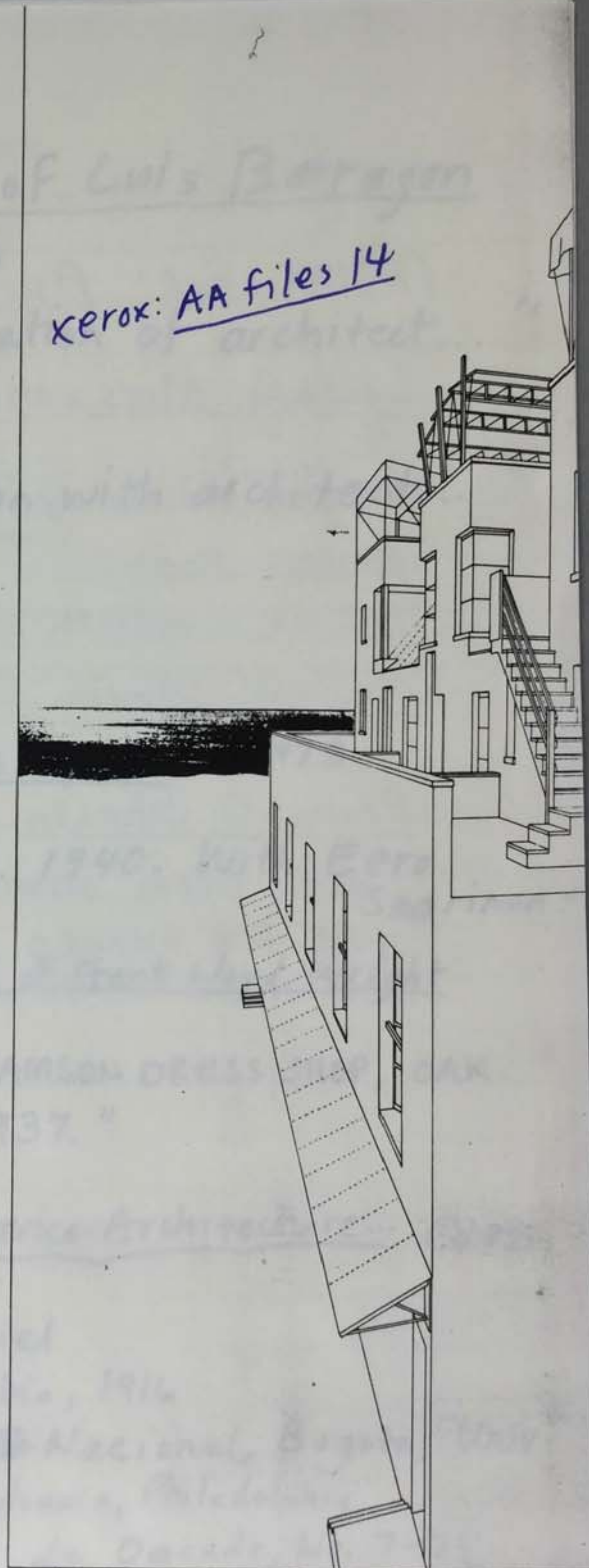
The residences are split into two types, those facing the setting sun and the central square, and those facing the rising sun. The former are intended for boisterous types — late risers who enjoy watching the action, drinking toasts to the sunset, etc. All of these flats are identical. Facing the morning sun are the rooms for melancholic types — early risers inclined to silence and solitude. These were imagined as a tragic poet, a musician and a mathematician, and the plans and sections were characterized accordingly. The house of the tragic poet is dimly lit; all the windows have the same tall and narrow proportions. In the musician's house, light is cast downwards from the corner-windows of the upper level. A black plaster wall slips from the lower to the upper floor, enhancing the flowing nature of the space. In the house of the mathematician everything is slightly warped. The staircase leading to the upper level warps over the bathroom. The warp of the ceiling-joists forms a doubly-curved surface. On the upper level is a calculating-table with a skull-shelf (a reference to the skull that Johannes Kepler always kept on his desk).

The construction is of precast concrete columns, beams and hollow-core planks. The walls are of integral-colour stucco on concrete block. The roofs are of galvanized metal. The rear awnings are of metal cloth. Construction will begin in September 1987.

Steven Holl, Principal; Lorcan O'Herlihy, Project Architect; Peter Lynch, Peter Shinoda, Tom Van Den Bout, Darius Solloway, Stephen Cassell, Laurie Beckerman, Assistants; Robert Lawson, Engineer.



Site plan.



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MOMA cat: Arch. of Luis Barragan
©1976

"...1973, with the collaboration of architect..."

"...1972, in collaboration with architect..."

"(not yet built)"

MOMA cat: Charles Eames ©1973

" STORAGE CABINETS. 1940. With Eero Saarinen."

MOMA CAT: Drawings of Frank Lloyd Wright
©1962

" 145. PROJECT: LEO BRAMSON DRESS SHOP, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS. 1937. "

MOMA cat: Latin America Architecture... ©1955

" SOLANO, Mesa Gabriel

Born: Duitama, Columbia, 1916

Studied: ^{italics} Universidad ~~de~~ Nacional, Bogota; University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Address: Avenida Jimenez de Oacada, No. 7-25, Bogota, Columbia

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MOMA cat: Built in USA ... ©1952

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Sargent and Lundy, and Frank J. Kornacker, consultants

BOILER PLANT

ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Chicago, Illinois. 1950

Philip C. Johnson

Landis Gores, associated

HOUSE FOR RICHARD HODGSON

New Canaan, Connecticut. 1951

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COLLABORATION:

Professor Mark Wigley
Friederieke Taylor

CONTRIBUTION TO EXHIBITION:

ALL ARCHITECTS

- Do you want to acknowledge any of the architects' personal assistants (ie: Thomas Leeser, Susan Nardulli, Nikki Cousins, etc.)??
- Richard E. Oldenburg, Director of MOMA
- Stuart Wrede, Director of the Dept. of Architecture and Design, MOMA
- Will you exhibiting works on loan from other departments at MOMA? If so, do you want to acknowledge the appropriate Dept. heads??
- Will you be exhibiting any works on loan from lenders other than the architects and/or the MOMA who should be acknowledged??

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*MOMA will acknowledge money (ie. Gerald D. Hines Interests)

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PHILIP

At the Museum I owe thanks to my co-workers on the publication staff: most especially the editor, James Leggio; also Jim Wageman, Bill Edwards, Tim McDonough, and Susan Schoenfeld.

3/16/88

Stuart recommends thanking the following staff:

will she be helping?

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Jerome Neuner, Production ^{Manager, Exhibition Program}
Richard Palmer, ^{Coordinator of} Exhibitions
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James S. Snyder, Planning
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~~? Sue B. Dorn, Development & Public Information~~
Priscilla Barker, Special Events

Austrians?

* the Germans who are donating \$\$ to help bring Himmelblau models over from Germany (this should be phrased so that it is Coop Himmelblau and not the Museum expressing gratitude to these German funders in order to avoid any conflict with the Hines Foundation funding credit) --see Mario Botta acknowledgements for similar situation

? Should Richard ^{S. Zeisler} ~~Sisler~~ (Trustee) also be thanked for his help in arranging the outside German funds for shipping the models

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

as of 3/31/88

The person responsible for bringing this exhibition into existence is the Director of the Department of Architecture and Design, Stuart Wrede. He generously invited me to be a guest curator and since then has been an authoritative and caring leader sacrificing time from his own tight schedule to devote energy and direction to ours.

There could have been no exhibition or book without the contribution of my associate Mark Wigley of Princeton University, theorist, architect, and teacher. In every field, from concept to installation, his judgment, knowledge, and hard work have been paramount.

Assisting myself and him has been Frederieke Taylor, Coordinator of the exhibition. Her tireless work, tactfulness, and patient loyalty to the project were irreplaceable.

My thanks to John Burgee Architects for criticism, office space, secretarial help. For organizational efficiency, Debbie Taylor.

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Page 2

At the Museum I owe thanks to my co-workers on the publication staff: most especially the editor, James Leggio, also Bill Edwards, Tim McDonough, and Susan Schoenfeld; and to the designer Jim Wageman. In addition, the following individuals contributed to the realization of the exhibition: Jerome Neuner, Production Manager, Exhibition Program; Richard Palmer, Coordinator of Exhibitions; James S. Snyder of the Planning Department; Sue B. Dorn, Director of Development; Lynne Addison, Associate Registrar; Jeanne Collins of the Public Information Department; Jennifer Carlson, Press Representative; and Priscilla Barker of the Department of Special Events.

My thanks also to William Rubin, Director of Painting and Sculpture; John Elderfield, Director of Drawings; Riva Castleman, Director of Prints; and John Szarkowski, Director of Photography, who so generously loaned paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs from the Museum's collection of Constructivist art. Magdalena Dabrowski, Assistant Curator in the Department of Drawings was especially helpful with our research of the Constructivist work.

We also thank the following institutions who so kindly lent works from their collections: the MAK Museum für angewandte Kunst, Vienna; the IBA (~~Institut für Bau und Wohnungswesen~~) ^(Internationale Bauausstellung), Berlin; and Land Hessen ^{and the} ~~and the~~ Staats Bau Amt, Frankfurt am Main.

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Page 3

For the impetus to undertake this exhibition I must thank two men who are working on books related to our theme. First there is Aaron Betsky who called my attention to the telling phrase "violated perfection"-- originating from the title of an exhibition proposed by the team of Paul Florian and Stephen Wierzbowski for the University of Illinois, Chicago. The second man is Joseph Giovannini who was another valuable source of preliminary information on the subject.

Special acknowledgement must go to Alvin Boyarsky and the Architectural Association of London who acted as the key patron of most of the seven architects in their formative years. The A.A. has been the fertile soil from which many a new idea in architecture has sprouted. ~~One of the architects in this exhibition has called it a process of "crystallization."~~ Alvin Boyarsky plays the role of catalyst without whom.

changed
as of
4/4/88

I must thank the artists whose visions have moved me more even than any purely architectural drawings: Frank Stella (painter); Michael Heizer (sculptor); Ken Price (ceramicist); and Frank Gehry (sculptor).

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In the end, of course, the chief credit must be given to the seven architects and their teams who not only produced the work, but made new drawings and models, researched old ones, and even made new designs especially for the exhibition.

Philip Johnson

Coop Himmelblau wishes to express their gratitude to ewe-Küchen Wels, Austria for financial assistance in transporting their models.