

Emotion and Invention in Architecture

June 14, 2008

2:30 PM

The Philoctetes Center

Levy: Francis Levy
Nersessian: Edward Nersessian
Albrecht: Donald Albrecht
Howes: David Howes
Mazumdar: Sanjoy Mazumdar
Salcedo: Julio Salcedo
Winer: Jerome Winer
A: Speaker from audience

Levy: I'm Francis Levy, co-director of the Philoctetes Center. Dr. Edward Nersessian is the other co-director. Welcome to *Emotion and Invention in Architecture*. I'm now pleased to present Julio Salcedo. Julio Salcedo was born in Madrid and studied architecture at Rice University and Harvard's Graduate School of Design under Rafael Moneo and Enric Miralles, among others. Salcedo has taught architecture design and theory courses both at undergraduate and graduate levels at several universities, including Harvard School of Design, Syracuse University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Cornell University. He has contributed to various periodicals in the U.S. and Spain, including *Pasajes*, *Praxis*, and *Arquitectura*. Salcedo was awarded the Young Architects Forum Award from the Architectural League and the first prize at the international competition for the redevelopment Hamar, Norway, in association with Marc Brossa. Salcedo's practice, Scalar Architecture, engages in interdisciplinary modes of architectural design and practice, particularly as they apply to landscape and urban design. Julio Salcedo will moderate this afternoon's panel and introduce our other distinguished guests. Thanks Julio.

Salcedo: Thanks. I think it would be best to introduce the other members of the panel, and then we can sort of find our way around what seems to be a rather complex topic and make it a little more palpable for everybody.

I first came in contact with David Howes through the publication of a book that was the result of an exhibition that took place in Montreal. The book is called *Sense of the City*. What the book does is it sort of rethinks and represents the city in its more complex reality: the qualities, the comforts, the communication systems and the sensory dimensions of public space in urban life. It's a new way to look at urbanism and to look at architecture through all five senses. And it talks about the sensorial and the transactional experiences of urban life. He's also the author of *Empire of the Senses* and *Sensual Relations*. He's a Professor of Anthropology at Concordia University, the Director of the Concordia Sensorial Research Team, and among other things he's also teaching Law, Commerce, Aesthetic Practices and Senses across Cultures. I think we can go into some of his other questions later.

Donald Albrecht is an independent curator, and he's an adjunct curator of architecture and design at the Museum of the City of New York. He's a Fellow of the American Academy in Rome. He's curated many exhibitions at Cooper-Hewitt, the Getty, the National Building Museum and many other places. He's the author of *Design Dreams: Modern Architecture in the Movies*. He's also the writer of a book that was not mentioned, *The Mythic City*, which I just breezed through, and it looked like a wonderful book. He holds a bachelor of architecture from IIT, the Nice campus. I think that figure of Nice might come up permanently through the discussion today. Both the *Design Dreams* book and another book that he's written, *Glass + Glamour*, discuss the promises of modern architecture, not necessarily in that sensorial way or in an experiential way, at the level of the individual, but more as a sort of meta-phenomenological way in terms of culture and what modern architecture means and what the materials mean. So I think it's going to add a very significant dimension to the discussion, more in a cultural sense.

Sanjoy Mazumdar has an endless and expansive biography and curriculum. He's a professor at UC Irvine in several departments, including Planning, Policy and Design, Asian American Studies and Religious Studies. His last degree was a PhD from MIT in Organizational Studies and Environmental Design. There's a long list of articles he's written. The titles are really colorful and precise. I might read some of them: *Even the Moon has a Dark Side: A Critical Look at Vernacular Architecture*, *Creating the Sacred Alters in Hindu-American Home*, *Architecture - An Artifact of Culture?*, *How Programming Became Counterproductive*, *Analysis Approaches to Programming*, (one we discussed during lunch today), *Sir, Please Don't Take My Cubicle Away*, *The Phenomenon of Environmental De-preparation*. His research examines social, cultural, religious and organizational aspects of an environment. I'm very happy that he came all the way from California for this discussion also.

And last but not least, Jerome Winer, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at The University of Illinois, Chicago. He is the editor of *The Annual of Psychoanalysis* and he was an editor of *Psychoanalysis and Architecture*, also the past president of the American College of Psychoanalysts. On the cover of the book *Psychoanalysis and Architecture*, it says something about, "Nothing is more essential to architecture than our experience of it. Psychoanalysis is the study of that inner experience." The book also talks about Frank Lloyd Wright at great length, and these are the chapters that Jerome wrote and directed. And it talks about another figure, which is Adrian Stokes. Adrian Stokes was a British art critic, and he introduced sort of Freudian thought to art criticism, so he's a very prominent figure, and very different to Wollheim, which is a contemporary, bringing the idea of experience into art and by derivation into architecture. I think it's a fascinating topic.

Maybe since you were the last person we can lead off with you. One of the questions that I had as a sort of interest of an intrusive nature to this, is what's the relation between phenomenology and psychoanalysts? You mentioned during lunch that there's an idea of more of a subconscious level of experience to it, whereas the early phenomenological movement, Husserl and stuff, were very much about a cognitive experience of it.

Winer: I thought you'd never ask. I think that my work is limited compared to my fellow panelists in the area of architecture, because I got interested rather late in life. We had a conference on Frank Lloyd Wright. I got to know Wright's granddaughter, who is the only

person of his five grandchildren who went into the area, although his sons did. We had a conference and we were fortunate to get a foundation grant, and then we got another one to publish the book. And we then went international in asking for distinguished scholars to contribute.

My own work was studying Wright, and what I learned in interviewing architects and speaking to them is not only is the average observer of buildings and other architectural structures unaware of the unconscious impact that may be resonating with their delight or dislike or hatred or fright of a particular structure, but frequently the architect has no idea either. And that I found fascinating. Many of the architects don't want to know. They handle that not by saying, I don't want to know what influences from my past or unconscious life is involved in my work. They deny it. It's irrelevant, and there's a myth still among many creative artists that if I really were to get into analysis of something of that sort it would bring my career to a close. I'd lose my capacity.

One of my colleagues, one of our chapters, is on interviewing four architects about designing their own homes, and what forces they thought were involved in designing their own homes. They were limitedly aware of something. So when you talk about phenomenology, again, you'd have to define it, and I really don't know too much about Husserl and other such things. But talking of it as the observable conscious, what many psychologists who are not psychodynamically oriented think of is what's known is what's known. And what you can observe and study—well, we work in a different area. We're very much interested in all kinds of creative people about what forces beyond their own knowledge are operating in their material of their work, not in why they are great architects. Why people have these great creative talents—Freud threw up his arms. He doesn't know. And I certainly don't know. But what makes for a great architect—we can talk about why a great architect has the influence that he or she might have on a given person, and we can talk about a lot of other senses. I can close at any moment, so—. I can go on, too.

Salcedo: Maybe we can bounce the question to the other side of the panel. Walter Benjamin very famously said that architecture is an art that is always sitting in a state of distraction, that the common passerby, or whoever is going to a building, is not necessarily going to notice the architecture that much. How the discipline deals with the fact that it's often seen as sort of distraction is very interesting, and to what degree does the experience of the passerby, whether it's conscious or unconscious—what's the productive friction between that experience and the piece of architecture? But if we look at it in a larger urban picture we can talk about urban design and not just the visual sense of it all, but the sense of smell, the haptic sense, tactile and—

Howes: I think it is fascinating that Benjamin describes the experience of architecture as one of distraction in that so much of architectural theory and architectural practice is informed by abstraction. The form of a building is what counts, the shape, and its relationship to the environment is often overlooked. The fact that it is an environment is often overlooked in that process.

I don't go to the unconscious. I try and stay a little bit more on the level, but what we've been doing is exploring the sensory dimensions, both of architecture and of urban life in general.

We've been getting away from going on sightseeing tours and getting away from city maps, and trying to understand both the contemporary sense-scape of the city and also the history that produced that. We live in a world now, where there was a systematic banishment of sound and also odor. Interestingly, just here in the United States, for example, in the nineteenth century the noise of industry, the hum of industry was seen as a sign of progress, but the turn of the century, the twentieth century, it gets redefined as the shriek of industry, and it must be suppressed, it must be banished, because anything that shrieks in that way can't be efficient. A new cult of efficiency takes over from the hum previously. So you have noise abatement campaigns that result in the silencing in the city.

Smell, in a similar way, while it actually animated all of the great public health movements of the nineteenth century, because people understood the connection between smell and disease, and to banish smell meant that you also eradicated the disease. That actually proved to be not the case by the discoveries of the germ theory of disease and so forth subsequently, but it leads to a whole concern with banishing smell, and therefore garbage collection systems and sewer systems and so forth actually put all of the smell and the pollution underground, creating an unconscious in a way.

The question is then one of how the senses, the non-visual senses, are allowed back after having been silenced in this kind of way. You will find actually in the design of retail environments meticulous attention paid to multisensory advertising and multisensory marketing. They're allowed back, but in a very controlled kind of fashion, which has to do with moving merchandise. So it's really a question of opening our senses to the city and exploring what it might mean to go on a sound walk or a smell tour or a taste tour—culinary tourism is actually very much developed these days—and understanding what that sensory ambience, that character, as we say, of a place is. You can't apprehend it through a photograph. You've got to try and use your senses, develop your senses, to find out just what the nature of the city might be.

Salcedo: Maybe we can also bounce the question back to this side of the table—it's kind of interesting, like a tennis match. But I am also intrigued to find out how religion and different cultures sort of read the city differently or read the domestic space differently. It's not just a question of how conscious of an activity that is, but how much does that shape an environment? I know that you've done all this work in terms of domestic environments with both Hindu and Muslim populations in the US, so is there—I guess explaining your work a little bit and maybe talking about that to some degree.

Mazumdar: There are two points here. One is the domestic scale and one is the urban scale. At the domestic scale, some of what you were talking about, creating an environment that is multi-sensorial and provides that kind of experience. Particularly when you look at religion, especially in the Hindu home, you find that there is a tremendous amount of inclusion of the various kinds of sensorial experiences that we think about. For example, they have an altar, and on the altar they have some activities they perform on the altar, so it's cleaning, it's putting up things in the altar. There's that haptic touch experience of it. There are the visual images of the gods, the sculptures of the gods, as well as portraits and actual artwork, plus photographs and easily commercially purchased art that's framed, sometimes not even framed, that's put up, not only at

the altar but in various different spaces in the home, other than those spaces that are considered to be profane. So there's a hierarchy of spaces in there.

You also find that the performance arts are engaged significantly, because there's chanting, and if they themselves can sing, they perform that. They have family and friends invited to perform this, but if that is not possible they put on records or CDs, and these are commercially available. So there's the oral ambiance that's created. They light incense, they light a fire, and that provides the smell kind of experience, and so on, so that there is a more complete kind of environment created inside the home. That in and of itself is something that you experience. So you walk into the home, and right at the entrance there are elephants greeting you, because that's a sign of auspiciousness. Not only that, in front of the entrance usually they create little diagrams, which are called *rangoli* or *alpana*. Those are mostly created by women, and it's usually done in India every day, and it's made out of rice powder, which the ants and other insects consume, so the next day you just wash it clean and create another one. There's symbolics associated with this. The nature of the diagram gives signals to people, as if somebody has an infectious disease, so you look at the diagram and you know if you choose to enter or not to enter.

So going right through the house, the altar then is best located in a separate space, but when they do not have that possibility in the immigrant home sometimes it's located in cupboards or in the kitchen. The thought of polluting it is what's problematic for them, and that comes from people unknowingly making contact with it, or walking with their shoes on, and so they have to create this little environment that's separate. It also performs as a meditative space, which means there is a sort of calming effect. You want the space where you can transport yourself. You want to be able to meditate. This is all within the home.

Then outside the home you look at cities—mostly we had been talking at lunch about cities in the west. We've been talking about Copenhagen, Madrid, et cetera. Look at cities in the east. There are some Japanese colleagues who have been doing studies, for example. They find that the cities start coming alive—they've sort of timed the activities—at 4:00 AM. It's still dark. And then people pick up the activities. Then there is a break, when these hawkers and moveable carts that are set up—in between 10:00 and lunchtime there is a lull in the activities—and then it picks up again during lunch hour. And then again calms down during the afternoon hours and picks up again in the evening and goes all the way till 11:00 PM or something like that. There you get the smell of the food that's being prepared right on the street. You get the clangs of the person preparing the food, the sound that comes with it. You're able to bite and taste and get that experience of it. You're getting all the sounds of the people who are negotiating in order to acquire this, and so there is this tremendous aural ambiance that we tend to overlook. Some of the western influence on designs tend to do away with some of that, because that's seen as problematic, the sounds of horns, noises, et cetera.

One could go on, but there's a tremendous amount of sensorial feels to the city, the street life, et cetera. There's a professor in Wisconsin who just finished her PhD on Chinatown in New York, and she talks about how the smell-scape spreads out from the individual stores, and she plots a diagram how far you can get the smell of a particular store, or the sounds that go with it and so on. There's an effort there to try to recapture once again the city in all its dimensions. But beyond this sentient experience, as I've been thinking about it, there is an extra-sentient

experience, that perhaps you're referring to, as being the unconscious. Perhaps there is something beyond the senses that we are able to—I wouldn't like to use the word observation, because it gets linked to the sight, but there are ways in which we absorb the effects of the city that we tend not to be able to even talk about. I think in literature perhaps it comes out in some essays, et cetera. Maybe you can talk a little bit about that.

Winer: To comment briefly about that, my office is on Michigan Avenue, a very busy street across from the Art Institute. There's a lot of street noise. There was so much in fact that I had extra windows put in, so it's one of the quietest places I know of. The relief of walking in at times to somebody who's under some stress is enormous, but they don't say always, "It's so quiet here. That's great."

I've been waiting for an opportunity also to talk about unconscious, haptic touch. In my career I've had five different couches, and at one point I had a corduroy one. By the way, no one ever mentioned consciously that I'd changed on any of these occasions, which baffled me. One patient came in and said, "I had this dream last night"—this is between the first and second couch. "I was having a great time lying on the beach, except the sand was so rough, and I kept touching it." This is the corduroy couch. "It was irritating, and I thought, gee, the beach used to be so smooth. What's happened here?"

We know in literature there are all kinds of—Proust and what was unconscious with the madeleine comes forward, and there's a wonderful unconscious perception in a Freud case of smell. Freud was an inveterate cigar smoker, as many of you may know, and he smoked cigars during the sessions. One of his patients, his Dora case, has a dream about something burning, and Freud had yet to discover that his impact on patients was profound. She was irritated with him in various ways and has this dream that there's something burning. Only much after she quit he realized it may have had something to do with his cigar.

So when I talk about unconscious—and when you're in a space, I'm using the analyst's office perhaps, or whether it's a park—. Another favorite anecdote: a lot of parts of Chicago are not safe at night, and a friend told the story once of being in Europe, in a city where it's quite safe to be in the park as it got dark, and that a child became more and more uneasy, not quite sure why, and saying, "I want to go home, I want to go back to the hotel, I want to go home." So there's this perception of spaces, of various kinds of things and senses that are not fully in our awareness and often color positively or negatively our experience. I have another example, but I'll wait.

Howes: Can I just say one point about the beautiful ethnography that Sanjoy has shared with us? I would refer to that phenomena as the senses in diaspora, and that you have Hindu populations transplanted to North America recreating the sensorium of their homeland with the materials at hand. And in that way not just passively experiencing the senses, but actively creating these sensory environments that give a sense of home, but in a completely different context. What's remarkable is how that can go on within the context of the very sterile cubicle kind of North American houses that this would occur in. I think it shows that remarkable transposability of the senses and the way in which in this case domestic space, but also public space, is appropriated and transformed, so that in spite of what architects have done to our senses by denying them with

glass towers and steel structures and so forth, you find these sort of attempts to recreate a sensorium, and very effectively.

Albrecht: Often times I think people do notice architecture. They often times notice the good because of the destruction of the good. In another example, there's a great example of Penn Station, and now people seeing how great Grand Central is. There's an understanding, because Grand Central is such a great space to experience. People say, oh my God, Penn Station was torn down. Why did we ever let that happen? You know, at the height of sort of a modern movement, why did we ever let that happen? So in a sense I think people are aware. New Yorkers are very aware. We're all experiencing this tremendous building boom, and when we're not being hit on the head by cranes, which is the most haptic of all experiences, I think we're really very aware and very concerned about the loss of light. So I think there is in reverse a kind of awareness, a sensitivity to the built environment.

Salcedo: If we also bring experience from an individual level to the collective level, I mean the work from your book on architecture and film, I think it would be interesting to talk about how architecture has this linguistic persona to it. It can signify certain principles or ideas.

Albrecht: Well, I would say there's probably two cities that are the most mediated, certainly through movies. Paris and New York are the big two, I would think. Rome I'm sure is there, with *La Dolce Vita*, but New York is the most mediated city. There are two cities here. There's the real city, and then there's this fictional New York. There was a man some years ago with a book called *The Celluloid Skyline*, and that's his thesis—actually it isn't as if there is the New York we live in and then there's the reflection of it in the movies. There are actually are these two New Yorks, that you can read them and they follow their own kind of logic. Ours follows a logic oftentimes of finance and money and zoning, and the movie New York follows logic of narration and narrative. There are certain directors who are brilliant at manipulating that, and maybe I'm alone in this because I watch a lot of old movies, but I go down the streets of New York and sort of am living both of those realities. I think sometimes the feeling of being endangered or whatever comes from those powerful images of film. Film teaches us those feelings, because they bring camera work, they bring music, they bring sound, they bring shadow, they bring light. They bring the synthesis of the real world. They heighten it in a way. And so they become a lens through which we see the real New York.

Salcedo: When we were discussing earlier also—this idea of the collective for an architect is sort of interesting, because sometimes there is a public. Sometimes there's a client. But often it's a little more diluted who the audience is going to be for the piece of work, how conscious you're going to be of them, how not conscious you're going to be of them. But I'm sort of intrigued by two stark images that were posed here. One of them is this incredibly intertwined reality of urban spaces in the east. It's very hard to untangle the individual from this collective experience. And then the other one is the patient going to the isolated room with the double layer of glass.

Albrecht: In corporate culture in the west, and America kind of has pulled that, advanced that further and further, that kind of cleanliness, the sort of antiseptic quality. But if you go—I mean one of the most amazing cities is Naples—Italy, not Florida. It's quite astounding how these people live in this city with these narrow buildings and these baroque facades that are falling

down on you, and also just the openness of the food stalls and the restaurants. Everything is just there. To an American coming from New York it's overwhelming. But they seem to find it perfectly fine. To us it's like, oh my God, it was so intense an experience. And there's a feeling of danger. For some reason the overflowing quality of the food stalls, the sound, and of course the famous thing with the motorcycles, where they drive by you at ninety miles an hour, really feels dangerous, and yet when you're there with somebody who knows the city they say you're not in any danger. But there's something about the sensory overload, coming from a more Western city that's more corporate, like New York or London. It's shocking to experience it. It makes you see New York differently when you come back to it, because you think, God, I don't think I could live in it, but wow, that's a sensory experience.

In Manhattan of course we're losing that more and more. This is the Chinatown story. I remember even ten years ago you could walk through Chinatown and there were foods that had very strong odors and you didn't quite know what they were. Or when the meatpacking district was being transformed—those early days when it was being gentrified—you'd go to some chic restaurant or nightclub and you'd still have that strong smell of blood at night, and you'd have a slight stickiness, which you kind of knew what it was but didn't want to think what it was. That's gone now. You go to the meatpacking district now—that quality of it once having been what it was is completely gone. So we're really losing that. Whether we're losing it all over New York City I don't know. I have a feeling not, but we're certainly losing it in Manhattan more and more.

Salcedo: Yes. The other part of the discussion today which I thought was interesting—I think that in a way I had sort of framed the discussion in terms of contemporary practices, and what I was seeing out in terms of cutting edge practitioners and the type of buildings that were written about and so forth. I do see a camp that is very intrigued by the sensorial, but albeit that a sensorial practice is just visual as I see it, and it's sort of detached actually from the transactional exchange between the individual and the environment. It's very visual, very detached, very computer-oriented. I am quite critical of some of those practices—

Albrecht: But some don't—

Salcedo: Well, some don't. Herzog and de Meuron and where people are very sensorial—and then the other sort of polarity within these ranks that I've been seeing is it's a practice that's very much interested in relational practices, where the architecture is merely scaffolding for activities to take place. The idea is that if you're very smart about the placement of those activities or if you're very smart about the placement of those activities vis-à-vis the city, vis-à-vis each other, that the adjacency of these activities create sparks and create an architecture that is of interest because there is a juxtaposition between people and program, and that becomes pretty fascinating.

It sounds to me like we started talking about the sensorial and very quickly gravitated to this idea of adjacencies and activities being close to each other. But you wouldn't think of this new architecture as being sensorial whatsoever. I mean it's an interesting full circle that the discussion has taken.

I'd be curious to know maybe a little more—if you take the hard core approach to this new discipline in architecture, which is, you know, a scaffolding for activities, matrixes of locations of programs. You had done some work with organizational practices and so on. What do you see experientially derived about some of these practices, and what do you see as sort of merely functional?

Mazumdar: For a while I guess with modernism we had moved towards almost an image of single function-oriented spaces and domains, so labeled spaces, such as kitchen, and we assume that only cooking kinds of activities occurred there. There's a separate dining space, where dining occurs. There's a bedroom, there's a living room and a family room. Of course the living room/family room in relationship is very interesting there too.

I guess with modernism there was this interest in developing spaces that would serve those particular functions that we had envisioned very well. But then people are starting to realize that these spaces and our lives are much more complex than that, that multiple functions are performed, that even though a space might be a kitchen, that is the place, it turns out for many women—that's their office, that's where they pay their bills, et cetera. That's the place where children get socialized. That's the place you learn about how your parents cooked and what kinds of aromas emanated from that food. So these multiple and more complex images perhaps can lead to designs that would have a multi-focal, multi-functional, multi-sensorial, and also extra-sensorial kinds of experiences, that we might start engaging architecture in a much more holistic way than we perhaps did in the past.

Howes: I think the endpoint of that functionalism is, you know, family homes, where there's a living room that nobody ever goes into, and a dining room that nobody ever eats in. You use the dining room only for doing your taxes once a year. Otherwise it remains pristine and self-contained. Therefore it's actually become a necessity to rethink interior space on the part of the North American families as well, in that functionalism derived in that way. Some of these—you know, the separation of the senses. You have a concert hall to entertain the ear, you have a picture gallery to entertain the eye, and you have—what is there for the nose? What is there properly for the touch? Is it a gymnasium, or not?

But, again, mixing these things up is what a lot of performance art is about nowadays, and indeed some of the ways in which performance art and architecture combine reveals a discovery of the multi-sensoriality which goes along with multi-disciplinarity, which goes along with this multi-functionality. It was almost as if breaking the separation of the senses and enabling these sort of crossovers to occur has become part of the great unraveling of modernity that we are now involved in. It's not postmodern, but it's just finding other ways of dedicating—

Albrecht: Well, the big example of this was—and I don't think it ever worked as planned. I may be wrong. In 2001, when Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas did the Prada store on Broadway and whatever that is—

Howes: Prince.

Albrecht: Right, Prince. There the idea was bringing these functions together. This was not going to be just a store, and so there was—there still is—a kind of amphitheater in the middle of

Transcript prepared by

RA Fisher Ink, LLC

+1 718-797-0939 / 800-842-0692

ra@rafisherink.com / www.rafisherink.com

the store, and there were going to be concerts and there were going to be events and there were going to be lectures. Whether it ever worked or not—I would imagine probably not, because the Prada thing is so off-putting. When you're in the store, unless you can afford the clothes you don't want to come back. And you're constantly being watched by these salespeople. Obviously what ended up happening was it became a kind of an art museum, so you're feeling like you're in the Museum of Modern Art more than you're in some kind of arena you want to come back to. There's nothing friendly about it. It was sort of the modern agora. It never happened. But Rem Koolhaas does try in all of his projects to create this issue of these adjacencies that will hopefully spark an urbanism, because that's what makes great urbanism, and that's what makes Rome Rome, Paris—that's what makes it great is this collision of various functions that great urban designers have figured out how to do. The great baroque designers of the Piazza Navona knew how to do it.

Winer: But it became also the idea that this is our space. I have not been in the Prada store, but I have the sense one would still feel it's a Prada store.

Albrecht: It is a private space.

Winer: Yes. We're at our space—the fountain is our—

Albrecht: Yes. America especially continues to privatize, so that many people, and this is much, much discussed—we think these are public spaces. They seem to be, but they're actually private spaces. There's a kind of surveillance, and there are clues and cues being given that this is really not a public space. Prada is a great example. It's very off-putting.

Winer: At the risk of sounding like a company man, I'm going to go back to the psychoanalytic office and the sense that—one of our contributors in our book was an architect who also had experience being an analytic patient. Whose space is this analytic room? Well, I pay the rent, so it's my space, but increasingly as a patient, an analysis becomes more and more involved in it, it becomes a mutual space. There are parts that different people notice in the office, and other parts—the pictures that are hung, some people have no idea what they are, and others are associating away that that's this or that. Or that's my picture. I see that it's back where it belongs, in my office. So I think the whole notion of whose space is it can be extended a lot further. And people, as they get more and more comfortable in the psychoanalytic process, feel it's a comfortable space for *me* to be in, even though it's not my space.

Salcedo: How do you deal—I mean it's always had great interest for me. Is there a need for a certain neutrality of the environment for your practice to be more successful, or if it were highly configured would it be better? Would you get different reads from different patients if—I guess I'm sure there's an ongoing discussion about whether you're lying down or whether you're sitting. I guess nobody lies down anymore.

Winer: Untrue.

Salcedo: Because as a designer the more you try to push a phenomenal agenda, the more you define things to a degree where they are not multivalent anymore, so it's—

Winer: That's a wonderful, wonderful question, because it brings back a funny memory. At one point I moved universities, and part of the deal was I had a designer provided to design my office. I showed her some things and she kept saying, "You can't have the chair in back of the couch. It looks awkward." And she kept moving it back. I said that's where the analyst sits. "Well, he shouldn't sit there, because it's throwing the room off." So that's one thing. But as far as the neutrality you bring up—in the old days it was thought that you should be a blank screen as much as possible and not have anything in your office that would be cueing people this way or the other, until people realized of course if you had a totally blank office, as I did for a few weeks while I was moving, and one patient said, "Hmm, you're a minimalist." I said, "No, the furniture hasn't come yet."

So there are things where people will get some idea, but we usually don't have highly personal tastes or pictures of your family. Some people do, some don't, but most don't give individual cues about—. We want to know what's inside of the patient and how can we facilitate in a neutral environment that material coming forth.

Levy: By the way, I should point out that our current show in the annex is all photographs by Saul Robbins that are of therapists' and analysts' offices. So you can examine some of these strategies.

Winer: I can get a comparative study.

Levy: Exactly.

Salcedo: Maybe it's a question for David too. We touched a little bit on the individual versus the collective, psychoanalysis and modernity, the rise of the individual, what that does to the senses. What's your take on this question of neutrality, vis-à-vis the senses—how strong they may be, and what does that do for society?

Howes: I think it's a foundational question. Let me just describe one study that we've done in the Concordia Sensorial Research Team, in our multisensory marketing project. We compared Wal-Mart with a store known as Ogilvy's, which is a classic department store in Montreal, five stories. It actually now consists entirely of boutiques, and we tried to compare the sensory ambiance of the two. We found that Wal-Mart represented degree zero of sensation, in the sense that it was a big box store, of course, and uses the color gray, which doesn't seem appealing at all, as its signature color. The most conspicuous sound was the beep of all of the registers taking the prices. But there was a tremendous hustle and bustle, and Friday night Wal-Mart rocks because of the way in which all the people congregate there. There was very little tactile stimulation in the sense that you were attached to your shopping cart and your shopping cart guided you through the aisles, and there was a kind of mechanization of movement as a result.

Ogilvy's, where a number of my student research assistants got thrown out of because they just felt so uncomfortable—it was so high end, and they just couldn't blend in whatsoever—had chandeliers from the ceilings and Greek pillars and marble, and the color was a forest green and plaid to connote the Scottish connection. Here the experience of going up the escalator is almost giving you a sense of upward mobility, whereas Wal-Mart was all on a level, and very

democratic in that regard. And then things like gloves that felt like butter in one person's description: they just were so excellent in their design.

So for the high-end store and all these different boutiques, internationally famous, there was this plethora of sensations, all over pleasing, all very seductive. Indeed the perfume counter, right at the opening, was one that enveloped you in a very sweet kind of aroma. But Wal-Mart takes that no frills approach and achieved total sensory neutrality, almost deprivation, precisely because of its ideas of no frills, not a cent spent on ornamentation. Totally functionality, where prices are everywhere. At Ogilvy's you had to look at tags and you wouldn't find the price, because what does it matter what it costs? It's how it feels that matters. I find that Wal-Mart as a public space—because it was a public space, there was a tremendous mixing of cultures and of people on that Friday night, and other times as well—it was achieving that degree zero to enable everybody to find a common place, whereas, again, Ogilvy's excluded people and only invited in certain ones, because of its way of appealing to the senses with a certain element of refinement.

Levy: This is a very interesting point. I think Walter Benjamin has a thesis on the process, and then Adam Gopnik in *The New Yorker* about five years ago had a wonderful piece—I think it was a series of pieces about the department store—its significance in the rise of the bourgeoisie also. I don't mean in bourgeois society, but in a sense a kind of post-aristocratic society. It's like the opera house, with its varying seating, the department store offering these kind of identities.

Albrecht: Even in the first department stores in Paris displays become very important, and also there's a couple of things. One is the surfeit of goods. They would do displays, which they do now. If you go to the Ralph Lauren stores you see this. He does this effect where there'll be eight million ties, and it gives you this sudden, somewhat fearful feeling like, I've got to have them all. Early department stores did that. Also the plate glass. Benjamin wrote lots about the plate glass, because you're able to see the objects, but you're not able to touch them, so there's a sense of delayed reaction. You've got to go in. Zola wrote a fabulous book called *Ladies' Paradise*, all about the urban effects and the psychological effects on people in department stores.

Levy: Zola?

Albrecht: Yes, Zola.

Nersessian: Emile Zola.

Levy: What's it called? *Ladies'*—

Albrecht: In English it's called *Ladies' Paradise*, and it's an amazing book written at the time of the making of the great Parisian department stores that are all about this, and it lives on today 100%. If you go into Bergdorf Goodman, you go into Saks, they follow the same psychological—you're right. The perfume counter is always in the front, which gives you that immediate enveloping.

Howes: Whereas Wal-Mart has testers but they don't diffuse.

Albrecht: Right.

Howes: At Christmastime I once smelled some kind of cinnamon, but I'm sure it was a hallucination. There was purposely no stimulation there, and the gray I think signified that. One of the things also about Ogilvy's is that everything was positioned and almost spotlighted, and so whereas quantity and abundance was the theme of Wal-Mart, there was this separation of goods in Ogilvy's. And then I think also Benjamin describing the *flâneur*, strolling, taking in the spectacle of urban life. But now the immersive nature of retail environments is what's quite remarkable, in that carefully chosen scents are being sort of injected into the atmosphere. Very carefully selected colors, in terms of stimulating or relaxing you—indeed, there's one store in Montreal, Pier One Imports, which has as its invitation, "Get in touch with your senses," and it lists them all, and how you can find gratification for each of your senses by shopping there. So whereas the *flâneur* is a visual appropriation, now it's the creation of these very immersive environments that are not just upper end, like Ogilvy's, but also any kind of angle.

Salcedo: I guess what is troubling to some degree is that if Wal-Mart's rocking and it does it with zero senses, what does it mean to the re-incorporation of the senses into an urban environment?

Howes: I think it's the people that count. Just as people who work at Wal-Mart represent all walks of life, there's a real interesting mixing that goes on.

Levy: Yes, it's like Robert Venturi. It's like why was Las Vegas—it's the same type of thing. You could take a good and evil approach to it, and you could look at it as a modality of thinking about how society can be. I mean there is some sort of—

Albrecht: There is a sensory impression to New York; there just is.

Howes: Wal-Mart tried that strategy. There are all these other strategies in between I think as well, and you'll find sports stores with a distinctive kind of strategy and so forth. That's one example. Wal-Mart works for that idea The lowest price is the law, or whatever it is, and it's that pure rationality that is embedded there. But there are, nevertheless—like why the blue and red? If gray is the base color, why the blue and red? Why that sort of domelike image on the façade? There are traces there, nonetheless, and it takes a very refined sense to actually detect how Wal-Mart is undoubtedly a place of sensory stimulation as well.

Winer: I have a question for the others about the change of architecture and what it might mean when you alter it. A very simple example, since we're talking about department stores, is the corporation that owns Macys bought Marshall Fields, which is one of the great structures in Chicago. Also, by the way, Carson's, which is a Louis Sullivan, is being saved, although it was, Carson Pirie Scott abandoned the store. They're fighting hard to save the building. But Marshall Fields was bought, and a certain organization, a resistance organization was formed because they changed the name of Marshall Fields to Macys. My own comment on it was it was the most successful merchandising decision since New Coke, which of course most of you know disappeared after a while. Why they would force Fields, which is a building of considerable interest in itself to change the name—and what you all think about even sometimes minor changes in alteration of the structure and how that can have an enormous effect.

Salcedo: Well, I think of interest is that we're having this discussion today about either experience or activity, whereas if we had this discussion during Venturi's time we'd be talking about language and **sensorial** and myths, and we'd be talking about architecture as a discipline that has to do with conveying meaning, and how through its elements it produces meaning, so the pediment or the domes or types of windows. And then the evolution, the failures, the successes, of course modernism, and is it of this language approach to architecture, to the discussion we're having today, which is very much about something that seems very direct in terms of the relationship, where this whole meta language discussion has somehow expired.

Mazumdar: David, I hope your comparative study doesn't conclude that we need more boxes of gray. But you bring out another point, which is emotion. That emotional connection with spaces, with places, and with architecture and designed objects is something that is very important I believe.

Albrecht: And that's why in some ways postmodernism, for all of its failings, served as a kind of purgative, because it reminded modernist architects, many of whom were not as bad as the postmodern—you know, you always have to kill the father. In fact, many of the great modernists were 100% into the senses. What postmodernism in the '60s criticizes is basically 6th Avenue. It's the kind of corporate towers, which now have their own supporters. You know, everything always comes around. But they did bring an idea that architecture should have a certain experience, and you should use metaphor. It should have a certain way in. And that was very valuable. I think that generation of architects—Robert Stern in New York, Robert Venturi in Philadelphia, that generation of many more: Charles Moore, David Yale—they brought that idea back. They tried to bring that root of architecture back, and they succeeded in doing that.

Salcedo: Right. I think the last generation of modernists, people like Ulrich Franzen and some other people, they were just overwhelmed with their failures to bring the way into architecture, this experiential gate, channel into it. You see them struggling, and it's a Herculean task, and there's some wonderful buildings from that time. But it was a little bit of too late, too little. In so far as public spaces goes and urban design goes, I think there was a sort of hierarchical system set up, where the visual was prime. There was actually very little sensorial—

Howes: Right.

Salcedo: I mean in New York if you look at, what is it, Lincoln Plaza—

Albrecht: Lincoln Center.

Salcedo: There's a fountain there, which has a haptic dimension to it. It's very reduced. It doesn't seem like postmodernism has really introduced anything that wasn't the visual back into it.

Albrecht: But what architecture does, because it's the only art that physically engulfs you—when you're walking through a building the changing of light, the feeling of the floor, the sense of the walls, the shifting of movement of other people—it can't be all visual. It's only all visual if you look at architecture in a book, which a lot of our history students do.

Salcedo: Right.

Albrecht: But when you look at it in a book, it cannot not be sensory if you walk through it.

Salcedo: Right.

Albrecht: Even the bad ones.

Nersessian: I have two contradictory thoughts maybe you could clarify. One is that I have no question whatsoever that the space or the architecture has an effect on one, and I very much remember some fifteen, twenty years ago my wife and I stayed at the Mandarin Oriental in San Francisco. For some reason we both commented after being in the room for an hour that this was a particularly calming, relaxing—it gave you a pleasant feeling, which hotel rooms usually don't. I don't know what it was, but it did, and other spaces have sometimes done the same thing.

On the other side, the contradictory thought is the fact that in a certain way the architecture is irrelevant, because from what you described about the Prada store it seems to me what's lacking there is the psychology. There is no attempt at being really welcoming, so it doesn't matter what Koolhaas did, because the Prada people essentially screwed it up. You go to the Apple store, it's full of life and activity, and so in that sense it seems architecture is irrelevant. In the other sense it seems it's so totally relevant.

Albrecht: Actually the Prada store succeeded in what they really wanted to do, which is to give an aura of exclusivity. And the Apple store is also presenting itself as egalitarian, but it hardly is. That equipment is quite expensive.

Salcedo: There was a time—I mean this sort of late modern architecture—

Albrecht: It's the message that they change.

Salcedo: Yes. These late modern architects that were just at the end of high modernism, right when postmodernism was coming in, were doing some interesting experiments, and the '70s is a fascinating time, the late '60s, '70s. But you have a lot of architecture that molds itself to the body, molds itself with activity. You have like conversation pits, which we no longer have. But a conversation pit is an adaptation of the physical environment to an activity, to a physical activity, sort of the heart of gathering. In that sense the neutrality of the space is zero, but it's incredibly figured to an activity. So it's interesting to talk about modernism and functionality, and when you go from the functionality of how a corporation works to these late modern attempts, where they were actually trying to configure an architecture just in terms of what activities were and how people would use the space.

Obviously, there are many reasons why that came apart, but you could be incredibly directive with the architecture, and it could be incredibly limiting or incredibly productive also. Some of the highly configured architectures today, the blocks and things like that, are actually not that contemporary, but some of the highly articulate shapes, Frank Gehry's. We were just talking about him in Chicago. One of the things that I think is missing is this sort of direct relation between activity and shape. But the question is also in terms of many other parameters, like

sustainability and other cultures using the space, or how much can a space be focused on a particular activity before it starts to become kind of useless.

Nersessian: Talking about Gehry, I thought there was a problem with the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, that he didn't put enough bathrooms. I was reminded that when they built the research building at Cornell a few years ago they again didn't put enough bathrooms. It's always been a puzzle to me how an architect who is so involved in designing the space can actually forget to put enough—

Albrecht: Well, actually, the Getty example is they predicted a certain number of people coming, and they designed the bathroom capacity for that. They proved to be far more successful than they knew. That's really what happened. They predicted 500,000 people and they ended up getting like a million people that first year.

Levy: The postmodernists provide **Flomax** also.

Albrecht: That's right.

Howes: If I could say one element that has struck me in terms of contemporary architecture—where do you feel at home, in a Bauhaus chair, in a building designed by Mies van der Rohe, or in grandmother's Victorian parlor? Where do you feel most human? Don said that he's a pure modernist, and I really want to hear him on this, but I will say one thing before saying that. To me much of the postmodern turn in architecture was a kind of fragmentation of vision, much like cubism was a fragmentation of linear perspective, but it was an escalation of a certain visual distraction, and it multiplied the planes of reference and so forth, without actually engaging the senses in as meaningful a way as might have been possible. So you find Gehry's streamlined kinds of images, which are all very smooth and compelling in that regard, but are these shapes to be felt or simply to be seen? What about texture in architecture? What about that quality of a space that has to do with its materials and what it manifests?

Because one of the things about working with glass and steel is that they have no organic qualities whatsoever. They don't retain odors or tastes, and the sound has a kind of hollowness compared to other substances that must have an impact that way. Now Don, you I think see some of those qualities of those building materials as actually having, I want to say a transcendental function.

Albrecht: Well, they did at the time. The glass building has gone through lots of different iterations. When it was first proposed right at the end of the first World War, it was genuinely believed that the metaphor would come true, that glass is physically transparent and it would produce a transparent society. We would be more open. If you read the theoretical writing, the great architects took this with a grain of salt. They were like, forget it. But if you read the theoretical writing of the glass boxes, the glass housing projects, we're going to create an egalitarian, open society, and they took the literal meaning. The building was open, so we would have an open society.

Then that doesn't prove to be true, because if you think about it, how could it happen? When it comes to America, it becomes a style. It becomes a kind of a corporate style, and it loses a lot of

its egalitarian, socialist, utopian movement in Europe, and it becomes Lever House, which becomes a sort of corporate symbol. Lewis Mumford, the greatest architecture critic, once famously said, you know what? It made sense. They made soap, so they wanted a building that looked clean. But Mumford also did praise the building, because by setting the glass box back—Lever House, you know, is at 52nd and I think it's Park Avenue—you brought sunlight in. This was a good thing.

Then all of the sudden everybody copies it. Okay, then it becomes a corporate anonymity. Then it becomes another meaning. Now all of the sudden it's back again. See, it's very interesting. It was those damn Richard Meier towers on Perry Street. Suddenly everything that's old is new again, suddenly now it's chic again to have a glass box. Now they're back, and they have the '40s meaning of progressiveness, and they've never been utopian in America. I'm doing a small exhibition on an architect that's doing one on the High Line, and I'll tell you, I would love to live in those floor-to-ceiling glass walls. I was raised in Chicago, and I've been in Mies van der Rohe's famous 860-880 Lake Shore Drive. I've got to tell you, when you're in that space and that glass is floor to ceiling and you look out on Lake Michigan, there is nothing like it. It is spectacular. Again, it's a visual spectacle.

Nersessian: Essex and Lex, they're building one—

Albrecht: Yes. Now the meaning of the glass building has shifted, and it's always morphing. It's fascinating how it's always changing its meanings. The postmodernists hated it: the glass anonymous tower that represented the anonymous corporation.

Salcedo: Well, they also hated the glass tower because it had created an urbanism that was very antihuman in a sense.

Albrecht: Yes.

Salcedo: There were no stores at the bottom.

Albrecht: Right. It was the urbanistic quality. Also it was a sheer copying of them all.

Salcedo: But it was lacking all the sensory aspects of the city that we're discussing now. It's interesting how this new architecture of scaffolding for activities is using glass and steel, but they're sort of pushing it to the limits so all those activities can ooze through the glass and metal and inform the spaces again. A lot of the glass towers in New York are not doing that well, and they're not creating urban public space that has different programs, different activities, different senses, different smells. The most productive of this new type of architecture does understand that to some degree. But it's still confounding that all this architecture is coming up again, because the biggest critique of it was how it destroyed the city, and it doesn't seem to be a reflective practice. What can we do to do a glass tower that doesn't destroy the city? That reflection is not there, and that's what's the most troublesome part about this new modernity, and all these projects in China and all these other projects, is that it lacks complete reflection and completely overlooks some of the experiments of the '60s and '70s, or even some of the lessons of postmodernism. This total lack of reflection I don't think has to do with either invention or

emotion or the senses. I think it has to do with a historical lesson that eventually grounds itself in urban life. But that's how I think the senses come back.

Albrecht: It's also that decline—now these are all these high end condominiums. In New York City they're only being built as these highly private high end—they're high end condominiums, where people are probably not even going to live.

Levy: It goes back to Jane Jacobs really. You have the destruction of indigenous life.

Albrecht: Yes, right.

Mazumdar: I'm fascinated by your comment that many years ago you lived in this hotel for a short period of time, and yet you recall that very clearly even today. So that there is some potential for architecture to be enabling certain emotional kinds of experiences—we talk about a whole range of buildings, like cathedrals or the Taj Mahal or others, which give us that kind of feeling, and the ability to create the feeling. Not that every piece of architecture, which is going back to your question, has to be that way. We do also need neutral and cleansing kinds of spaces as well. In the hotel, making coffee this morning, you use that machine. You press a button and it says "cleaning time." It takes 30 seconds and it just makes all these noises and water comes out. But we also need the ability to cleanse ourselves every once in a while in order to be able to experience those emotions that we tend to enjoy. But there is a whole range of emotions as well, and you can list them—

Albrecht: Also, I think far better at emotional development is the interior design field.

Mazumdar: Not solely though. I mean urban—

Albrecht: We're talking now about architecture, but I think interior design is really significant, because that's where the body really meets the environment more clearly.

Salcedo: If you don't think about disciplines, just in terms of the making of environment at different scales, I think it's also—I mean things work at different scales better than others. Definitely at the interior scale, textures and haptic is there.

How much time do we have? Do we have questions from the audience?

Nersessian: You can have questions from the audience.

Salcedo: All right. Does anybody have any questions?

von Unwerth: There was an article in *The New York Times Magazine* a couple of weeks ago about the instant city, and I've been thinking about it as you've been talking, especially with respect to Dr. Winer's comments about Marshall Fields and the attachments that clearly developed between the citizenry and this building, and how those attachments proceed, and how they might proceed in a city that's springing up literally from the ground, from the desert in Dubai or in China, and it's a completely new urban space. Is that something that can even be programmed in any way, or do you just have to wait for the smells to start rising?

Winer: I would think that it would take a while for people to feel this is *my* space.

Albrecht: They personalize it after a while.

Winer: Yes. It'll take a while though. When you build these gigantic structures in places, population areas, some of which are very small, it's the people with all the money are doing this, not me, in most cases. But I'm sure others—that's the part I got out of skimming. I was disappointed, actually, with that.

Albrecht: So the question is do people who live there, do they feel that they can personalize—

Winer: Yes.

Nersessian: Has it happened in Brazil yet?

Howes: That's a good question. I was in Vienna—

Albrecht: Brazil, you mean the capital city? I don't know.

Winer: That's twenty-some years old now.

Howes: The only reports that I have are just the massive failure because of the impersonality of the façades, and the impossibility of a street culture to actually take shape. In Brazil you have to have a street culture, the cafes and so forth being key.

But if I could just give an example. Vienna is famous for its coffeehouses, and the coffeehouse is of course an interesting public/private institution. It's said that because apartments were so small and so cold that people gravitated to the coffeehouse as a space of both being able to engage in solitary activities, like reading the newspaper, and engage and exchange and actually work. There are many writers, novelists, who actually gave as their address, as we know, the coffeehouse, which is I think a delightful thing. They're also, interestingly, the last place that you can smoke cigarettes in Europe right now. So fearful was the uncoupling of coffee and cigarettes that I think every other jurisdiction I've been to—you notice the bans, beginning with Ireland—but there is one place where that was somehow kept.

Albrecht: The coffeehouses—

Howes: The coffeehouses in Vienna. Now what's interesting about them is that Vienna is actually engaged in a process of trying to figure out what has made it the cultural capital it is, and how it can attract creative industries to Vienna in the future. They see that as being a development strategy. They therefore had a five senses call, two years ago, of proposals that would actually analyze the sensory ambiance of Vienna, to figure out what it was that made it such a creative space to begin with, how could it produce such great music and such other cultural—you know, Klimt, visual arts as well. It's trying to work out what is it that actually accounts for the ambiance, the character, the atmosphere. And this is important, because now that you can work anywhere in the world, because we're all connected by the internet, you can actually choose your place of residence. Again, Vienna wants to attract people. But what they

were doing was actually using liquid gas chromatography of coffeehouses, taking a snapshot of the qualities of the air—

Albrecht: Only in a German-speaking country.

Howes: I know, I know. They were doing both an ethnographic analysis of what the qualities of interaction were in these spaces, and trying to figure out what exactly the quotient of cigarette smoke and the sweet sachertorte and so forth was in order to get this mix. I think it's interesting, it's for a commercial purpose, to try and attract creative people to Vienna.

Albrecht: So they've decided that it's all rooted in the coffee. That's what they decided?

Howes: No, but they think that it's the mix. They're looking at the music, they're looking at—the whole point was that instead of just saying how do we attract film and other designer types, they said, okay, what is the sensory ambiance of Vienna? Many of these things go back to the fin de siècle, but this was what they were trying to work through. This is one project that was looking at just the smell and the feeling of Vienna, what is distinctive about its haptic contours.

Salcedo: What is fascinating about this question is that it also brings both poles of it. If you look at New York and the commissioner plan from 1861, I think in a way it was an instant city. There were thousands of blocks laid out that weren't there to begin with, and the idea of it is that you created an organization that afforded a lot of different functions to be in direct contact with each other. New York doesn't have piazzas, doesn't have parks, narrow sidewalks. The public life is the grid, the public life is the circulation, the public life is this sort of infrastructure of commerce, of circulation. So if you look at how to create an instant city, I think a very great model would be Vienna, and they're sort of trying to figure out what percentage of smoke to caféness.

But also, you can look at New York as a very successful example, where you've created a system that affords complexity, that affords variety, that affords diversity. You know Rem Koolhaas's famous book about New York that has a very funny drawing of two naked men with boxing gloves, wet hair, eating oysters, in a locker room. It's a paradigm of the New York Athletic Club, which had a swimming pool, had a boxing club, had an oyster bar, had all these things. Through the elevator these two men were able to take all the functions, and they're represented naked in boxing gloves eating oysters. So the confluence of all these activities that are being brought by this system of the elevator to—

Albrecht: The vertical proclivities, yes.

Salcedo: That's an analogy of the city, that the city is not unlike a New York Athletic Club, where a very fluid—well, now it's a pretty sad infrastructure system, but at the time a very successful infrastructural system with streets and grids, sort of afforded every block to be different, and every block to be intrinsically connected to the next one, so you have this variety and this quality of life. The question is if the eastern city were to be designed in a systemic fashion, if somebody could come up with a follow-up to the New York sort of ultimate variability and intertwined-ness it would be great, or if somebody were to come up with something that's sincerely potent, as a Vienna coffee place, from which everything could stem from, I think those would be two amazing models of a sort of urban building.

Winer: David's comment was fascinating, because my wife and I had lunch in Café Sebarsky in the NYA Gallery, and we've been in Vienna a couple of times in the last few years, and we said the newspapers are here, the coffee is here, the dishes are here, the sachertorte. Why doesn't this feel right? It does not feel like we're in Vienna. We didn't realize they didn't have enough gas chromatography study or whatever.

Howes: Well actually, it was dirty. Viennese themselves refer to the coffeehouse as a dirty place. You know, it's not the fast food restaurant, and the grime, the patina is actually part of the experience of the place. As a North American I felt a little bit, you know—

Albrecht: That's my experience, that's the Naples experience.

Howes: Yes, it was a bit of overload for me, although I could see how the exchanges were indeed very important. One of the persons that I was with took us to the coffeehouse where he had always gone in the evening as a student at the university, with twenty or twenty-five other friends each time, and that was their living room in effect.

Winer: I want to throw in another commercial for psychoanalytic theory, just for a moment. There's a concept called a transitional object, which is the teddy bear or the blankie that a lot of small children have. It has to feel right, it has to smell right, it has to be held in a certain way, and of course mothers know that the worst mistake they can make is to throw it in the washing machine when it gets dirty. It has to be just that way. I wonder if there isn't some kind of additional factor besides the gas chromatography, et cetera, that relates to our deepest internal functioning in some kind of way in this familiar environment that may well be a factor.

Audience: I have a question that I think is fitting to follow on this one. I'm wondering what your assessment is of current architectural practice from a psychological point of view, like your psychological assessment or analysis would be of prevalent architectural design values. It seems that the last ten or twenty years, especially with the rise in multimedia experience on the streets, has been to over-stimulate us, and yet at the same time we're losing our sensitivity to all that stimulus, and so you're talking on a multi-sensorial experience, but the street becomes a place where, especially now with iPods and telephones, we're becoming more and more removed. I'm wondering on a psychological level how would you characterize what's going on, not just in the United States, but really around the world. Maybe the US is prevalent in that or not.

Most of the examples you talk about, such as the house overlooking Lake Michigan, is a very elite experience, but what sort of sensitivity is being given to the working class, or even the middle class for their accessibility, really their equal entitlement to have and enjoy a multi-sensorial lifestyle that doesn't have to be so far removed from a reality?

Winer: I think that a lot of people's inner lives are so fraught with pain that they do their best to have so much external stimulation coming in that they don't feel. I think this has to do with the ghetto blaster radio going so loud that most people find it very, very difficult, and all kinds of other things going on, so that you are preoccupied, and so much of your psychological energy is involved with perception that it blocks out the inner experience. That would be a quick answer. From the point of view of space and the city, I think many of the great people, going back to Caesar and others, knew that for the lower and the working class and the unemployed, et cetera,

what do you do for them? You can't just build a coliseum. You have parks, and you have homestead. You have something to provide an environment so that there's a refuge from the extreme stimulation of the workplace or the city.

Albrecht: What also has happened is the towers in the park, this idea of public housing, these isolated towers that were meant to have gardens at the base. They have a very bad reputation in New York. But actually, I work three days a week at the Museum of the City of New York, and there are many, many of these housing projects nearby. They're actually really good. Many of them are very good, because what's happened is over the years people have formed garden clubs—and actually this idea that they sit in this barren oasis, I'm sure that's true in many of them, but in many of the other ones, in New York at least, they work. It's very interesting to see how they work, and it has to do with people individualizing things, like I said, the garden club. There'll be fences that say "Please don't walk on the grass," and they keep them up. There is a neighborhood that has emerged in many of these developments.

Salcedo: The working class and the urbanism, and the rise of modernity is interesting because many cities, particularly now, like the cities of the south, places like Mexico City, like Sao Paulo, they're getting 10,000 inhabitants per day, and they are creating accretions to the city that are purely organic. You can't implant them. So they're also some type of eastern city. It's not the Dubai or it's not the China city. There's a way of life that is becoming extinct, which is rural life, and everybody's flocking to the city. So the type of urbanism that is being built by these people, what codes it has, what sort of diagramming it has of public spaces, what the sensory perceptions are there—I think there are very few people that have been able to make sense of it all, except that it's happening and it's happening fast. That's sort of organic growth. The planned growth for the workers, which starts with industrialization, and then you get the towers in the park.

What I've always found troublesome—though some of these projects may or may not work now—is that lack of organic nature to the transformation. With urban renewal in the '60s you had the destruction of entire neighborhoods that were very haptic, that were very intense, that were very multicultural and had a multiplicity of functions in them, and those were taken out for the towers. So I think there's a lack of thinking about imperative ways to deal with working class housing and the working class. But generally those experiences are a lot richer in a sensorial aspect, from what I've read on some of these aspects, so I don't know.

Audience: The reason I want to speak is because what you said excited me very much, the fact that you were in that hotel room and you felt so calm and peaceful. I lived in Sedona, Arizona, which by itself is a very calming place, but I did residential real estate there exclusively because I wanted to get into all those magnificent homes that were just such perfect examples of architecture to me. Architects were very challenged in Sedona, because the topography was very, very challenging. The demands of the clients were challenging. It was a spiritual community: the clients wanted feng shui or whatever their desires were, and it was very important that the homes be built in concert with the land, and they were just gorgeous.

In the twelve years that I did residential real estate there, what I noticed was the happy homes, the spiritual homes, the calming homes are the ones that sold in a heartbeat. The ones that didn't have that feeling didn't sell as well, or as quickly, or for as much money. It's the truth. When I

went into a home that had that aura and I showed that home to my clients, I insisted that they sit in that home, and I stood behind them so they'd have the sensation of being alone. I wanted them to experience what I experienced, and it helped me sell homes. That feeling is real and it does exist.

Howes: This is where the extra-sensorial—and this is a term that is actually very interesting—what is the extra-sensorial? I think that you're putting your finger on it, the pulse. Is it a combination of the senses, a kind of fusion of them, or is it a transcendence of sensory experience? What you're describing I think is very much what that is, but that's where we have to analyze next. We need not only something on the architecture and the senses, but what this idea of an extra-sensorial might be, in that it isn't analyzable in terms of a liquid, gas chromatography machine, and what it might be able to identify.

Albrecht: But it might be all those things combined with sunlight, and with the knowledge that when I'm in Vienna I see it for Strauss, for opera, for writing. I bring to it certain intellectual associations that translate in.

Howes: I think that's key. We shouldn't think of the senses as passive, as just being receptors. Think of the idea of the evil eye, for example. The idea of the evil eye is precisely that sight projects, and this idea of the senses as receptors is not right. The senses are sort of sites of interchange, and when you talk about interactivity I think that's precisely it. They're not just receptors. They are engaging us with the environment, and the limits of your senses are the limits of your world. You exist all the way out there to the point that your perception stops. So these are ways in which what you bring to an experience—

Albrecht: What you bring to a place, yes.

Howes: —is very much a part of it, but your senses are educated in that way. We could be doing a lot more to educate our senses, especially smell and taste. What do the nation's schools have to do with those senses? And even touch, again. Gymnastics, or gym: is that really an education of touch? Those senses have been systematically underdeveloped, which is why they are such good targets for marketing and advertising. They're so uneducated that we can be led by them in all kinds of ways that we would have defense, but also interest if they were more developed.

Levy: Conversely, getting back to your question, I wonder about the salability of places where major crimes had occurred, like the Polanski, you know, these houses of crime. I'm being facetious, but—

Mazumdar: I'm fascinated by this example that you gave of Sedona. I think you put your finger on it. You mentioned feng shui, and that's an ancient set of principles for design. Similarly, there's vastu shastra, and there's a city in Iowa that's been designed among those principles. Some people are starting to look back once again at those ancient principles as to what it is about the way that they went about designing that had a different component to them, that is extrasensorial, that has an emotional bonding, a place attachment, an ability to relate that is lacking in many of the modern designs. In a way that gives you sort of a formulaic approach if you want to follow the formula, but there are also ways in which you can address those formulas

in the way you design that gives you that kind of an experience, the feel that you got. I think perhaps we should go back and take a look at those principles once again.

Audience: I do agree with you. They took it to an extreme. The bathroom, they went true feng shui. The toilet is close to the floor, very uncomfortable to me. But it worked for a lot of people.

Audience: I study cognitive science, so my question from the ancient to the most modern I think goes to some of the recent research, at least in the past fifteen years, about the role of emotion in cognition, which I thought was something that came up in a couple of points that were made. My curiosity is, what is the contribution that this budding research field could make to the design of environments, and also, to go back to the notion of these ancient principles, how is it that they address these qualities of cognition and of mental life that are only now being recognized as topics for study in laboratories and in that sort of setting? I think there's this very profound effect that holy places have on people consistently over time that is not just a cultural thing, but is also something very much directly involving the sensory experience, but also the emotional and decision making experience that someone goes through. How do they attach themselves to these religious entities and some of the other things?

Mazumdar: There are several modern cities. One example is Oroville, which is—

Levy: Wow. Our son was there.

Mazumdar: Okay.

Winer: Where is this?

Mazumdar: A place in southern India, Oroville. There are places that are being constructed. It doesn't have to be very old, but then they are following certain ideas and principles, some religious and some not necessarily so, that incorporate this idea that we have a certain connection with the land. **There are concepts in different cultures, for example, a concept that's used by the Japanese that gets into this relationship that we have with the land.** There are ways in which we can capture some of those, and they have been used, and that's how you get back to those old principles as to how they have been used.

Now, it is easy to dismiss some of this work as superstitious, but if you take a look at these principles, then perhaps it has a set of ideas and notions about building. Because we were talking about this connection with places, and here we tend to design in some ways on a very psychological level. I like this color red, or I like a particular space. We tend not to be very analytical about it. In other words we would talk to the architect, and most architects wouldn't take you much further than that to ask you what it is that you like. Perhaps you'll have some magazines, et cetera, that you'd say, well, here's some idea of what I would like to have. These people are thinking about the client and the designer relationship from a very different perspective, and it has to do with a whole complex set of relationships. Feng shui, for example, is supposed to have nine levels. I can only probably say four or something like that, so I cannot speak very well about it. But there are ideas about how a building has a particular character, and a human who is going to be occupying that building also is given an attributed character, and there has to be this harmony between these two characteristics. The way they go about bringing

it, that's the interesting part of design. There is a lot of potential there that we haven't explored, and that has to do with that deeper emotional connection with places.

Howes: If I can add to that, the word sense is an interesting one in that it refers both to sensation and signification, and both feeling and meaning. I think that what you're bringing out is precisely—because we're doing so many of these choices about interior design on the basis of hedonistic qualities, of just the pleasure, we're not getting at the signification. One of these principles that you're addressing actually has to do with signification, the ordering of things, and not just the pleasing nature of things. The senses have always been suspicious in the western tradition, because they are sources of pleasure, and pleasure has always been suspect. But the point that even Aristotle recognizes is that the senses also lead us to knowledge and understanding, to meaning.

My reaction to cognitive science is that we need to expand our understanding of the sensorial, of that sense-making activity. Before we go to cognitive models and see them playing out in various kinds of ways, we actually have to attend to our senses and novel ways of using them, which we can acquire through studying cross cultures, and finding out what that activity of sense-making actually involves. So it is a new methodology, which is opening up just that domain of sensation and perception, and instead of going underneath it or beyond, it's letting the senses play off each other and following their various travels. And that I think can lead to new understandings of cognition.

Just as an example, there are tribal peoples in South America, the Sulya, who will say not, "I see," when they mean "I understand," but they say, "I hear." And they will say of a visual pattern, like a weaving when they know it, "It is in my ear." Surely it is in their eye, but no, "It is in my ear." This different centering of cognition in the ear as opposed to a visualizing kind of brain has implications for social interaction and for the feeling one has for the world. Now, as an anthropologist, I map these kinds of transformations, and the meaning and the use of the sense across cultures, and it becomes fascinating to explore what the senses are good for. We need a user's guide for the senses that takes us beyond the kind of psychologism or medicalization that we typically find, to open up those possibilities.

Mazumdar: You'd be interested in this idea of synesthesia—perhaps you know about this? It was identified as something problematic initially, wasn't it? But now people are realizing that synesthesia is the source in some measure of extreme creativity.

Winer: You should define it, if anybody knows it—

Mazumdar: Oh, maybe you should define it then.

Winer: Well, it's experiencing cross sensation. One of my friends in medical school had it. A cello was brown when it played. Cellos play brown. It's the experience of something in a different sensory modality, and it's sometimes found in schizophrenic patients, so that gave it a bad name. But did I interrupt—

Mazumdar: Well, I guess his name was **Cytowic**. He had written this book, and in this he describes his first patient, that he was invited to his neighbor's house for dinner, and the neighbor

was cooking and gave him a little sample to taste, and looked at his expression and said, oh, I know what's wrong, the chicken is too pointed. But that's in part what you're referring to, is the ability to actually mix the senses and the ability to then transform that into a creative endeavor.

Howes: A remixing, precisely. *The Man Who Tasted Shapes* is the name of the book.

Mazumdar: Yes, right.

Howes: And indeed, how do you taste a shape? That kind of transfer is intriguing in terms of the possibilities that it opens up. How do you visualize a sound, or how do you hear a color? Synesthesia is a medical condition, very, very rare, one in 200, one in 2,000—it varies, the estimates. But different cultures, in my findings, seem to focus different synesthesias. Colored hearing is the most common one. Actually, color-graphing synesthesia is the most common one in the west, where a particular letter has a particular color. But what if you didn't grow up with a fridge with colored letters on it? What if you grew up in an oral society? Would that be the most common form of synesthesia? Or when you hear a word instead of seeing it, what other forms might synesthesia take? I agree that crosses of the senses is actually a fascinating area.

Audience: I'm an architect, and I teach a course in architecture, where one of the early sessions I have them do a blind walk. They go in partners, one just eyes closed or covered, and the other one taking them around the city. It's amazing within twenty minutes what comes out in terms of sound, feeling of textures, smells, going into pizza parlors, or just passing by different shops and being able within twenty minutes to tell what is in that shop. It stimulates amazing conversation when they come back, before they start actually thinking about architecture and about design.

The other thing I want to say is that I designed a facility for the blind in upstate New York. With architecture it's mostly visual of course, but here I had to think about sound, had to think about textures, had to think about smells, with water fountains, with fragrant plants, this kind of thing. I said to the director of the facility, it's a new thing for me to think with these other senses. And he said you also have to think of the visual, because these people are going to ask the staff, "What does it look like?" So you can't totally disregard the visual in this.

Mazumdar: It's interesting that you're so successful with your experiment or assignment of getting the students to go around the city doing this. Just one example from my own teaching, I asked students to come in barefooted next class, and not a single student takes me up on that offer. I come in barefooted, but they don't. So that's wonderful.

Another point, as I'm thinking way back when I was practicing. We were designing a resort on the beach, and there was this ocean, there was the salt water and the sand, and it occurred to me that we have to give this haptic experience, so I set up a swimming pool with some sand gardens right near the beach, but in the hotel, so that people could sort of translate that experience of the ocean to their own personal kind of—can I have a shower here, can I have a swim here.

Howes: One of the interesting things about museums has been that often they construct models for the blind, so that they can actually feel what is otherwise represented in a two-dimensional picture. But sighted visitors have actually found that to help them as well, because it slows them down, and instead of just racing past they take the time to feel. Actually apprehending the form

of a painting—Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*, this kind of thing—through the tactile as well as the visual doubles the meaning. But also, there are slight differences and things that you would note in one sense that you might not note in another. So it's precisely that the senses don't necessarily line up, and that when you do bring down one, what are the others capable of that I think makes for that to be such a brilliant exercise for people to experiment with other sensory ratios and see what they can perceive.

Audience: What was interesting to me is that when you're walking in the street and a bus or a truck passes you, you know it's maybe five feet away or six feet away. When your vision isn't there, when it's just the sound, you step back. It's very frightening to have a bus coming five feet away from you, whereas ordinarily you'd say, I'm perfectly safe. But with sound it magnifies.

Levy: We have another question here.

Audience: I'm a psychoanalyst from the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute. To bring it back to the realm of the body structure, the physical structure of a building and the parallels between the psychological structure of people, I was just reading Edith Wharton's *Age of Innocence*, which is about New York and the New York society at the turn of the century. When you were speaking about the grid of New York, it was a very small grid at that time. If you lived above 44th Street you were considered to be out in the boonies some place. The city was filled with all kinds of stimuli, but because the same people did the same things with the same people all the time, in fact a lot of it was unrecognized by them. There was almost no reaction to it. It was just a very ritualized kind of interaction that happened. And Edith Wharton—at one point they're bemoaning the new people who were coming in and bringing change into the city, and one of the characters rails against what she calls 'trends.' The observation by the author is that the way of New York was to not notice the trend while it was coming in, and then once it was in place to behave as though it had always been there. I think there is a parallel between that and our patients sometimes—that you want to be aware of what's happening, to be curious about what's happening. When you're talking about cognition I think it's very important to have this curiosity and awareness of what's changing and what's happening to the architecture, what's happening to a city, and how we all interact with it as well as how people interact with themselves.

Winer: That's a fascinating observation, and it reminded me of something I had a discussion with some other analysts about, and none of us had a very good idea how to explain this phenomenon. It's that you have something in your office, let's say a picture or something on your desk, and you've had it there for eight years, and a patient walks in and says, "Oh, you got a new picture," in that very familiar space. That I'm sure is different from each person, but it's common enough, and I think all of us clinicians have run into that. Why today do they notice it, et cetera?

I wanted to comment about selling houses in Sedona.

Nersessian: Anyone in the market?

Winer: Something about Frank Lloyd Wright, and the idea of the calm and certain environment, and even the idea of the emotional and the cognitive, three questions all at once. Wright had an enormous capacity to be empathic, and figure out—we're talking about house clients now—what

somebody wanted and what would please them, et cetera, and it was dazzling to some people. Some of you may know of the Prairie Avenue Bookshop, which has a national reputation. It's on Wabash in Chicago. The owner of it is an architect, and I got to meet him through my research. When he was young he interviewed forty owners of Wright houses, and he swore every single of the forty families he interviewed thought that their house was Wright's favorite, and that there were many other defects in other houses, but because—and the way we put that together was that Wright was a genius at being able to pick up what people wanted. Then of course he would come in after everything was completed, and there's a famous story where he did the furnishings, et cetera, and came to visit, and while the hostess was out of the room I think it was, he rearranged all the furniture the way he wanted it to be, because he still considered it his house.

So there is a certain capacity, a kind of empathy that can be used when designing. But what Wright seemed to have personally, which affected a lot of people, was that—and this was why at lunch we had a question about *Please Don't Take Away My Cubicle*. It's that he took away walls and cubicles and compartments and boxes, and in fact called the modernist the 'glass box boys,' and had these wonderful spaces where the houses and the prairie school houses often merged with the environment, even to materials, colors that he favored, and there were few dividers between rooms. I associated this, again, from a psychoanalytic, somewhat speculative position, that it takes us back to early in life, where there aren't 'you have to do this,' 'you can't do that,' et cetera, and there's a certain kind of appeal to a lot of people, so that some of Wright's spaces have this, or the Johnson Wax Building in Wisconsin, which has this wonderful office type space, where there are no cubicles. Nobody's forced to be in their compartment. So what you were talking about, *Don't Take Away My Cubicle*—it's a bit of a status symbol. It took me a long time to get this cubicle. But I think the confining, and Sedona, the pleasure, whether they are more natural houses in some ways, and people feel that—you don't go to Sedona if you're not interested in the surroundings.

Audience: It's interesting in America we always get back to Frank Lloyd Wright. One major impediment to psychoanalytic understanding of architecture is the lack of the architect's fantasies. But when you know the fantasies it is interesting, but not terribly useful. Frank Lloyd Wright talked about the windmill in spring green, and he said it's like Romeo embracing Juliet. When you look at the structure, it doesn't look anything like anybody embracing anybody else, but to him it did.

Levy: Do you have an answer?

Salcedo: Well, no. It's just been going through my mind for the last few questions that architecture in a way is not construction. It's a notational art. It's an abstraction of reality that becomes a notational art, that produces a series of documents, that produces a building. That's another way to see architecture. So as a notational art there's a lot of disconnects between reality, both at the front and at the back, just in terms of the fantasy side of it or what's going through your mind. It becomes a notational art and then it becomes a building, and there's a lot of productive friction in the abstraction of reality to the means of the architect back to the building itself.

James Sterling was a very famous British architect, and he taught at Yale and many other places, and he used to say, "I don't care if you wear red socks while you're designing," in a sense that your motivation would or would not come out through the building, which is an interesting question for psychoanalysis. So how accurate can one's desire be traced to the building form? I guess the fact that it's a notational science also makes it pretty hard to incorporate the senses without new techniques and methods, and if it's hard at the level of architecture, it's also incredibly hard at the level of urbanism. The discipline itself is not always equipped to answer a lot of these issues of the sensorial practice. It's not just notational aspects. There are methods, and there are a lot of aspects to the practice that sometimes is very productive and fosters an engagement with the senses, as in when you're walking through the building and you see the light, you don't see the light. Architecture does that very well. How it deals with texture, how it deals with sound, how it deals with smell. Obviously it's a discipline that has to come with these things, and it's finding its ways to do so.

Levy: Thank you very much.