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Michael Jasper

Study and question the legacy of teachings of Rowe and Eisenman

- 1 Architect, educator and historian, at his death in 1999 Colin Rowe's influence on post 1945 architectural education in North American and Britain in particular was generously acknowledged. His impact as a teacher had already been celebrated, first in 1985 when he was awarded the American Institute of Architect's Topaz Medallion for Architectural Education and then in 1995 when he was awarded the Royal Institute of British Architect's Gold Medal. His books include *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays* (1976), *Collage City* written with Fred Koetter (1978), *The Architecture of Good Intentions* (1994), and a three-volume collection of essays and memoirs *As I Was Saying Recollections and Miscellaneous Essays* (1996).
- 2 Under Rowe, and over a twenty-five-year period (1963-1988), the graduate urban design studio at Cornell University took urban scale elements as the site of invention and of intervention. The design studio was distinguished by the analysis of a series of relevant design problems, an attitude loosely defined as contextualism, and an approach to design based on a belief in a constant oscillation between, as Rowe wrote later, 'the present and the past, between the empirical and the ideal, between the contingent and the abstract'¹.
- 3 From an analysis of studio projects undertaken under Rowe there emerges the main tendencies of his approach to teaching, one that endeavours to engage architecture and the city as a form of open-ended, flexible research project.

- 4 In what follows we examine Rowe's teaching as a kind of theoretical practice, one moving beyond mere method or process such that it contributes to architecture's theorisation. Which kinds of architectural-urban problems did he emphasize? What concepts and devices and which composition procedures were called up? What style of architectural thought is at work and what are its distinguishing characteristics? What happens to the theoretical lens in its transmission and transfer through students, and the singular student of Peter Eisenman in particular?
- 5 In order to begin to explore these questions, we critically survey Rowe's teaching in Cornell's Urban Design Studio from 1963 to 1988. We then examine an instance of Eisenman's studio teaching and attempt to tease out key variations on Rowe's teaching including his use of figure-ground as idea and visualisation device. For Eisenman, we consider his Venice Project Studios, delivered at the Yale School of Architecture over a three-year period (2009-2011). we conclude with observations on the still unrealised legacies from Rowe's teaching and suggest next lines of research.

Existing Literature

- 6 Secondary literature related to Eisenman's teaching is largely limited to a monograph that appeared in the mid 1980s. Published under the title *Investigations in Architecture*, the book documents an experimental studio run by Eisenman at the Harvard Graduate School of Design which took city-scale precedents in three different contexts as its point of departure².
- 7 A much greater body of secondary literature exists around Rowe's Cornell graduate urban design studio. The point of view of such writing has swung between the generally descriptive or anecdotal to the analytic and thematic, the viewpoint of the present paper. Such secondary literature around Rowe's studio teaching can be organised chronologically in four clusters each roughly a decade apart. The first cluster appears in the years just after *Collage City*'s publication – itself a retrospective manifesto as the authors suggest on the findings of the Urban Design Studio – and is dominated by former students of Rowe³. At a reasonable distance from the teaching are essays by Stuart Cohen, Wayne W. Cooper, William Ellis, Steven Hurtt, D. B. Middleton, Thomas Schumacher, and Grahame Shane⁴. A second period is clustered in the late 1980's to mid 1990's as Rowe prepared to retire from teaching with a spate of essays appearing in the spirit of a festschrift. This includes essays by George Baird (1997) and Joan Ockman (1998) and a full issue of *ANY* in 1994⁵. In the mid 2000s, the third decade, Rowe generally and the lessons imparted from a certain reading of *Collage City* specifically are revealed as important influences on a generation of European architects, accepting the acts of an international conference held in March 2008 in Venice at the Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia as dispositive⁶. Some thirty years after *Collage City*, nearly half of those included in conference proceedings chose to take on the Rowe and Koetter book as their main interlocutor. Closest to us, a collection of ten essays on Rowe was published in 2015 and of these a third directly engage with the ideas and impact of Rowe's teaching⁷.

Speculations on the Contingent in Rowe Studios

(...) that collision of palaces, piazza and villas... that inextricable fusion of imposition and accommodation, that highly successful and resilient traffic jam of intentions... And Imperial Rome is, of course, far the more dramatic statement... with its more abrupt collisions, more acute disjunctions, its more expansive set pieces, its more radically discriminated matrix and general lack of 'sensitive' inhibition... [it] illustrates something of the 'bricolage' mentality at its most lavish⁸.

Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*

- 8 Teaching materials related to Rowe's studio projects completed during his twenty-five years at Cornell (1963-1988) have been sourced from academic publications, with key primary sources in Cooper, Hurtt and Middleton 1983, and Rowe and Middleton 1996⁹. The data surveyed is reasonably representative of the work from the multi-decade studio. Out of some one hundred and fifty studio projects recorded under Rowe over that twenty-five year period, fifty were surveyed and, as will be seen in the following, close reading of some dozen across specific project types used in the development of this paper¹⁰.
- 9 Analysis of student work completed under Rowe reveals a limited range of program types including waterfront sites, impacted grid collisions, and field/edge ambivalences. These produced architectural-urbanistic responses that included linear buildings, towers, and perimeter blocks. Open space, shaped or otherwise given figural presence, became an organising response in certain studios. While contextualism was and continues to be embraced as a catch-all for one of Rowe's major contribution, other concepts and operational devices were at work in the studios and deserve highlighting. The notions and operations of collage and collision in particular are relevant to an inquiry into more complex modes of design process generally and their capacity to inflect project theorisation in particular, to return to an opening provocation.
- 10 A review of teaching materials reveals that three kinds of studio problems were considered on a regular basis: (i.) infill, connection or completion problems, taken on at the scale of the composite building or group plan; (ii.) grid and fragment studies largely explored at the scale of the street and block plan, frequently the result of grid collisions or grid extensions; (iii.) overall city-wide field or mapping studies that may include open spaces of various kinds as a key ordering device such as water, park, plaza, garden. The projects appear on a whole to have been speculative or theoretical project briefs and not actual studies underway. In what follows I describe aspects, key elements, and examples of each, recognizing that often the studio blurred the boundaries of these artificial categories.

Composite buildings

- 11 Infill, hinge or connection conditions were favourite studio problems. In these, Rowe and his students developed over time a move from linear buildings – dominant in early studios – to what he called composite buildings¹¹. These function to define edges, enclose space, and simultaneously work as objects of focus.
- 12 In studio projects for the Providence Capital District, Rhode Island (1980), for example, one sees a range of urban scale problems at stake including an absence of spatial definition and foreground/background ambiguities. Middleton's response suggests one range of architectural-urban elements that recur in other student schemes from the

time: shaped enclosure of a figural building (the Capital), use of open space – here a body of water and a circus-shaped formal garden – to organise city form, a composite building which defines and simultaneously punctuates space and a particularly clear illustration of the power of the figure-ground plan technique. (fig. 1)

Figure 1. Fabric and open space as figure and ground. Proposed site plan. David Blake Middleton, in Colin Rowe, *Providence Capital District Development Strategy Studio*.

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- 13 Another problem identified by Rowe in this group of studios was the need to establish focus within the grid. Points of focus might occur at points of overlap. The response was a version of the point tower and podium. The two or three-storey podium hold the edges and accommodates cranking or inflections; the tower or slab uses its mass and elevational potential to gather the focus in the larger field. This is a further example of this desire to find architectural-urbanistic solutions that serve multiple readings. The linear building that can deflect or inflect and become object is one instance of this. Steven Fong's solution to the Marlybone studio is a particularly elegant example of the both figure and ground aim, heavily informed by a typological understanding of the London terrace (fig. 2).

Figure 2. Composite building generated from field and edge conditions. Figure-ground proposed plan. Steven Fong, in Colin Rowe, *Regent's Park London studio*, 1979.

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Grid collisions, field extensions

- 14 Wayne Cooper's figure-ground plans summarize both an analytical tool and a representation/design approach and at the same time can serve as an example of a group of studios concerned with multi-block problems. The tool or technique of figure-ground appears as a constant resource and beginning point over the decades. One particularly clear example of the clarity and complexity, the limits and the beauty, that could result from its use can be seen in Cooper's study of Weisbaden, Germany. (fig. 3) One senses quickly the city *gestalt* and the architectural differences in built form and open space start to emerge with slow consideration. These are not simply mappings but conjectural proposals intended to reveal urban-scale strategies.
- 15 In the Rowe studios, the figure-ground plan – a reduction of the complexities of the physical city to black and white drawings delineating mass and open space –, summarize a base ideal (the city as formal *gestalt*), an analytic tool, and a representation device. Steven Hurtt notes that the figure-ground can be taken as a sign for studio efforts to reconcile the traditional, predominantly solid city and the modern city of continuous, open spaces with object buildings dispersed¹².

Figure 3: Mapping and analysis study of Weisbaden. Figure-Ground plan. W. W. Cooper, in Colin Rowe, *Urban Design Studio*.

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- 16 The Buffalo Waterfront studio, taking as point of departure a lake-side location in Buffalo, New York, deploys the figure-ground plan in an exemplary manner to speculate on a possible future Buffalo, extended and completed. According to Rowe, Buffalo ‘appears to be the best, the most extensive, the most conclusive’ of the studio projects¹³. A close analysis of the plans for Buffalo and the text of a contemporary exhibition catalogue reveals the following five conditions at work: (i.) areas of grid collision to be exploited; (ii.) a strategy of restoration and eventual correction of unresolved and incomplete conditions¹⁴; (iii.) a latent park system, overlain with two formal models (the naturalistic and the rectilinear); (iv.) the idea of city texture; and (v.) the idea and use of urban poché¹⁵ (fig. 4).
- 17 Rowe and the studio team continue to use linear building to define edges. It will take subsequent studio work to learn how to manipulate or control the linear building while at the same time create an object characterised as an incident within the city fabric. This last idea or compositional revelation is perhaps one with the greatest potential for approaching the urban-scale design problem of field extensions.

Figure 4. Grid collisions: extensions for the Buffalo Waterfront. Group project: R Baiter, R. Cardwell, D. Chan, W. Cooper, H. N. Forusz, A. H. Koetter, M. Miki, E. F Olympio, F.R.G. Oswald, in Colin Rowe, *Buffalo Waterfront studio*, 1965-1966

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City-wide propositions

- 18 The third category of problem addressed under Rowe's direction in the Cornell Urban Design Studio takes on a different scale. The larger field, whether the city or open space more generally, occupies the Rowe studio in later years. Rowe's Cubitt Lecture of 1979, highlights this shift of emphasis and scale of investigation¹⁶. The parallel publications by Rowe and Koetter of *Collage City* to a more subtle degree provide another formulation of the theoretical intent and reach. Underlying the whole endeavour as noted at the beginning is the re-engagement with modern architecture and the traditional city conjecturing that an inflection of modern architectural types can be used to solve traditional urban problems.
- 19 Baltimore, Berlin, Florence, London provided material for much of the studio work and the group project was not uncommon. Completion and extension are the most legible terms, and a close reading of Lonman's Florence plan, for example, reveals a confident and complex resolution of urban scale problems (fig. 5). A full range of elements is in play: composite buildings, the public terrace, regular voids – what Rowe and Koetter designate as “stabilizers” in *Collage City* –, the memorable street¹⁷.

Figure 5. Completion and extension of an existing traditional city. Proposed extension plan. Bruce Lonnman, in Colin Rowe, *Florence studio*, 1980.

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- 20 From the above too brief survey, a number of constants can be claimed to distinguish Rowe's urban design studios as theoretical project. This is to suggest a taxonomy of three studio categories can be used to begin to understand the potential lessons in Rowe to contribute to the interrogation of studio teaching and project theorisation. Three kinds of studio brief were identified: composition building, grid collisions/field extensions, and city-wide propositions. What, if anything, do they share? It can be claimed that the following constants distinguish Rowe's studio work: dealing with the city as a gestalt; engaging with a limited set of architectural-urbanistic form problems and devices appropriate to the city, with key ones from the period including: figure, field, pattern texture, edge, axis; a similar-in-range corpus of architectural-urban forms; down playing specific uses as a strategy to resist function-dominant mode of thought; employing techniques of abstraction, thus a limited number of drawing styles, with figure-ground leading the way as a device for rendering the contingent and the ambiguous; collage as a method of design and an ideal position vis a vis the city, one which values inclusion and formal conjecture, using urban exemplars from all periods including the modern movement.

Models of Exteriority and of Interiority in Eisenman Studios

I believe there's a need [in architecture] to return to figuration, not icon but figuration. But not full blown figuration but partial figures. Figures that can be

understood as aspects of ground or aspects of other figures but that do not in fact lead to necessary whole objects (Eisenman, *Urgency*¹⁸).

- 21 Announced in his 2007 lecture at the Canadian Centre for Architecture as cited above, Eisenman's resistance to whole objects, to simple form, to singular not multiple objects can be seen as one legacy of Rowe's teaching, even if the legacy is to be turned away from. A student of Rowe at Cambridge in the early 1960s, Eisenman has reflected in numerous published statements on the influence and configuration of the thinking imparted in those years. In "The Rowe Synthesis", which I will take as indicative of the tone if not the full message, for Eisenman that influence extended to a relentless interest in conditions which precisely resist synthesis, which, that is retain their respective identities in an and-and logic as opposed to a logic which oscillates between figure not ground¹⁹. If this appears too abstract, then clearer evidence of the Rowe legacy can be found in Eisenman's studio teaching.
- 22 A multi-year studio developed at the Yale School of Architecture 2009, 2010, and 2011, Eisenman's Venice Project studio will be taken as preliminary evidence of this transformation. The cycle of Venice Project studios each contain four key elements, swinging between those that might conventionally be thought as either internal or external to the discipline²⁰. The character and trajectory of the studio – and its potential contribution to debates surrounding teaching methods – is suggested in a review of these elements: (i.) a pair of ideas, a polarity as will be seen; (ii.) an exemplary building or urban situation to be engaged critically; (iii.) exploration of the generative possibilities of a contemporary theoretical lens for working on architectural problems; (iv.) a limited set of formal and transformative operations. A functional program was always also in place, though was specifically to be treated in a perfunctory manner according to studio outlines, an attitude not dissimilar to Rowe as earlier described. Together, these elements informed the technique and method of the studio's work. The following summarizes studio problems and approach by year.
- 23 The first Venice Project studio dealt with rhetoric and grammar, confronting the proposals of Alvise Cornaro (1484-1566) for Venice's basin with Guy Debord's notion of *détournement* and Pier Vittorio Aureli's reading of the city as, according to Eisenman, an 'archipelago of monuments'²¹. In the second year, the polarity is that of *genius loci* (or spirit of the place) and *zeitgeist* (spirit of the time or what Eisenman call presentness), and the case study site for analysis Le Corbusier's Venice Hospital project (1964). The place of the contemporary lens is occupied by Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia, a condition in which simultaneously several perhaps incompatible places exist through a strategy of superposition.
- 24 In the third Venice Studio, the polarity or idea pair is figure and typology, this pair itself was further complicated by a confrontation with the notions of *disegno* and *colore*, a dialectical couple proposed to mark differences, for example, between the Florentine painting of Pontormo (on the side of *disegno*) from the Venetian painting of Giorgione (on the side of *colore*), and between Rossi's Gallaretese Housing and his Cemetery of San Cataldo in Modena. Two project sites echoed this conceptual doubling, with studio members working in pairs simultaneously on a site in Florence (Piazza della Signoria) and one in Venice (the Arsenale basin).
- 25 In terms of studio structure, at their most basic, the Eisenman studios were intentionally divided into an analysis (four or five weeks, or one third of a fourteen week semester) and a design or project phase (the remaining eight or nine weeks, or

two thirds of a semester). The structure of the studio mimed the ambitions of Eisenman: conflating Cornaro with Palladio read through the lens of Debord's idea of *détournement* in the studio's first year – and studying the impact both in terms of method or technique of analysing the problem and, in turn, deriving a physical response. It is worth citing at length a segment of Eisenman's studio outline to get a sense of the intent:

The goal of the class will be to adapt other strategies of *détournement* [as defined by Debord] directed toward the rethinking of the Laguna as an urban archipelago. *Détournement* will also serve to direct our ongoing investigation of the relationship between architecture and representation. If architecture traditionally maintains a one-to-one correspondence, even coincidence, between the signifier and its signified (ie: a column must both appear as structure and act structurally), the inversion of meaning carried out in *détournement* suggests the possibility of unmooring architecture from this formulation²².

- 26 Certain outcomes can be seen in studio projects emerging from the first two of the Venice studios, on the site of the now voided Rialto Bridge (fig. 6) and on the site of Le Corbusier's project for the Venice Hospital (fig. 7). Both suggest an engagement in work on the language of architecture as well as in the realm of thinking simultaneously with variable methods and systems of drawing and modelling.

Figure 6. Testing architectural implications of rhetoric and grammar through the lens of *détournement*. Aidan Doyle and Palmyra Geraki, in Peter Eisenman *Venice Project Studio I*, 2009.

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- 27 In the third year of the studio, the third variation, Eisenman sets out the problem as continuing an investigation into “aspects of the architectural discipline²³”. In this final Venice studio, the operative polarity is an engagement of figure and typology. It is

worth citing the outline at length, in part to start to tease out the differences from previous years:

This studio will engage the problem of figure – or the fragmentation of figure – and typology in architecture today by tracing an invented lineage through central and northern Italy, from Pontormo in Florence to Giorgione in Venice, from Aldo Rossi's Gallarese II housing in Milan to his Cemetery of San Cataldo in Modena. These precedents will serve as transformative or possibly "analogous" projects in their Florentine and Venetian settings. The opposition of the Italian terms *disegno* and *colore* will also inform the technique and method of the studio's work²⁴.

- 28 In this final configuration of the Eisenman Venice studio cycle, the multiplication of elements and interrelationships is evident: not only is there a dialectic inverted or abolished (figure and/or type); there is a geographic duplication (Venice, Florence) and the key studio protagonist (Aldo Rossi) is doubled again, split into the Rossi of San Cataldo and the Rossi of Gallarese. What might with some justification be characterised as the baroque phase of studio findings seems to end in a fitting flurry of gestures (of ideas and forms) that do not however exhaust Eisenman's structural ambitions to found new architectural knowledge. This crescendo that peaks in the third year, that is, rather than exhausting the inquiry rather builds momentum for future studio work.

Figure 7. Researching heterotopic devices in plan and section. Jonah Rowen and Daniel Markiewicz, in Peter Eisenman, *Venice Project Studio II*, 2010.

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- 29 An attempt to draw principles or conclusions with further application, to generalize lessons out of the three Venice Project studios, is difficult. That said, an accounting of the ambitions, if not hypotheses can be tried and a close reading of the unit outlines yields some clues. Polarities, that of *genius loci* and *zeitgeist* for instance, are proposed as hypothetical frameworks for a critical approach to analysis and the development of specific responses to the studio brief. Eisenman deploys them as one means to encourage studio members to try via formal and physical means to locate possible critical architectural capacities in the space between the terms.

- 30 Eisenman hints at such ambition in the second year's studio outline where he discusses the investigation of the possibilities of grammar and rhetoric as operative linguistic devices in architecture²⁵. This is one way to formulate the research problem then tested in the projects: not so much a 'what is' the space between the two terms of the polarity, but how might one formulate the architectural question of the two such that something new is revealed. This opening of possible futures or capacities in architecture is one way to characterise the specific research problem interrogated by Eisenman.

On continuity in the Rowe and Eisenman approach to studio teaching

[...] because collage is a method deriving its virtue from its irony, because it seems to be a technique for using things and simultaneously disbelieving in them, it is also a strategy which can allow utopia to be dealt with as image, to be dealt with in *fragments* without our having to accept it *in toto*, which is further to suggest that collage could even be a strategy which, by supporting the utopian illusion of changelessness and finality, might even fuel a reality of change, motion, action and history²⁶.

Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*

- 31 Inaugurating a larger study of the university architecture studio as field of architectural thought, two approaches have been briefly surveyed. What, if anything, do they share? At the most basic, the Rowe and Eisenman studios can be read as investigations of specific architectural problems, whether work on contemporary ideas, form precedents, the traditional/modern city dialogue, the design process, or more general strategies for work on architectural knowledge.
- 32 Going further, and looking at specific characteristics and qualities, the following elements seem to be in common. First, there is an emphasis on precedent strategies, whether as formal responses to be collaged onto specific project sites in a spirit of conjecture (Rowe) or as architectural concepts (Eisenman). Such strategies and concepts swing between Rowe and Eisenman: from figure-ground to event-field or partial figure; from collage or collision to superposition respectively. Second is repetition: studio problems are repeated over several years with subtle variations and refinements. In the case of Eisenman's Yale studios, a framework is adopted and replacement terms – of concept, operation device, and site – introduced. Third, there is an explicit effort to remain open to the new, and to renewal generally. For Rowe, renewal occurs around the endless refinements that result from manipulating architectural-urbanistic materials in favour of the city. In the case of Eisenman, this is achieved through an engagement with contemporary thought supported by a deep engagement with architecture's history. Fourth, reliance on a limited number of composition devices and operations. Fifth, the functional brief and use generally is absent or not emphasized. Rowe downplays function over a privileging of the city as an eclectic and coherent whole. There is another aspect, related to transmission: studio findings are documented and disseminated. For both, documentation of the studio process, exhibitions, and publication ensured registration of the work.
- 33 The differences between the two are both evident and subtle. For Rowe, the research problem is emphatically that of reconciling traditional city form and modern architecture. Here, form research is at an urban scale and conclusions, however provisional, do result. Think of the linear building, or that of composite buildings, the

discovery of the figure-ground drawing as tool to form ambiguous buildings and site conditions which blur any single figure or ground registration. The research problem in both Rowe and Eisenman's Yale studios might be characterized as form research using operative frameworks delimited by ideas used to read projects from the history of the discipline in order to generate new conditions. A parallel and self-complicating dialectic with multiple contexts (historical, real, theoretical) and internal conditions of any architecture.

- 34 The attitude toward context varies, as does the underlying assumption about autonomy. At a different scale and in a different realm – that of the city – Rowe's deployment of figure-ground relationships passes through a filter or is indexed against cubistic composition devices not only in plan but spatially. This distinguishes his approach from the devices evident in Eisenman studio projects: scaling, graft, tracing, overlay, inversion, and in an event-field logic.
- 35 Alongside the above characteristics, the analysis of studio work also reveals a number of shared aspects in relation to the specific part to whole problematic, returning to the opening propositions. First, there is sympathy for continuity. This is manifest in efforts to reveal traces of palimpsest sites for Eisenman or for Rowe in the insistence on the continuity of the urban form. Thus the building project is only ever an event in a longer and always already underway *continuum* composed of many systems. Both I believe share a commitment to the notion and device of urban stabilizers. This is the case whether a virtual stabilizer in the form of that building type or case study project (Le Corbusier, Rossi for example) for Eisenman, or a real stabilizer in Rowe's Regent Park studio²⁷. A third commonality, perhaps the most surprising: both rely on similar operations for the generation of form. Interchangeable I believe are the operations of collision (more resolutely used in the Rowe studios) and overlay (those of Eisenman). Both Rowe and Eisenman, to take a final example, accept the contingent. Both, that is, allow for and in fact embrace impure conditions: that fragment of Rowe in the opening epigraph, and Eisenman's partial figure to take only one example. And this contingency is seen in the oscillation of Rowe's composite building that blurs stable figure-ground legibility and Eisenman's trope of superposition.
- 36 While there are other terms that would be revealed in a longer study, taken together these four aspects offer one characterisation of the university studio as theoretical model, one that distinctly embraces and accepts manifestations of complex ambiguity. Privileging ambiguity and multiplicity, the sensibility in evidence differs from a part-to-whole logic. Such a logic can provisionally be described as favouring a part-and-part or a ground-to-partial figure problematic to distinguish it from a figure-to-ground coupling.
- 37 Further lines of research would productively open up from these provisional findings. Each line, I believe, adds to contemporary debates about the content and methods of architecture education. At the same time, these lines of potential further research confirm the validity of the initial propositions and the richness of the Rowe and Eisenman examples. At least four such future areas of research can be identified as a form of provisional conclusion.
- 38 A more detailed and lengthy consideration of the range of architectural-urbanistic problems, their spatial conditions and formal characteristics should be attempted. Other university programs should be examined. Additional close analysis of studio materials from Rowe and Eisenman could be undertaken to further expand the opening

propositions and to further invigorate this narrow survey of their studio teaching. In the case of Eisenman, the teaching should be examined against the backdrop of his own office practice and historical-theoretical projects. Such a move would reveal compounding influences between their various activities and provide further evidence of the university studio as site of knowledge production.

- 39 The Rowe and Eisenman studios, in conclusion, can be seen as efforts to interrogate architecture and its possibilities through the university studio as a field of constant renewal. In that sense, studio work does not lead to definitive conclusions. It is more accurate to say that conclusions are endlessly deferred except in a provisional sense, the activities of the university studio creating conditions of possibility for new architectural categories, and new forms of knowledge to emerge: ones that resist returning to a part to whole bias in favour of an endlessly open and positively ambiguous mode of thought and practice still to be fully exploited.

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NOTES

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2. *Investigations in Architecture: Eisenman Studios at the GSD 1983-85*, edited by Jonathan Marvel with Margaret Reeve, Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, 1986.
3. Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *College City*. Cambridge, Mass/The MIT Press, 1978.
4. A reasonable though not exhaustive list of articles can be found in Steven Hurtt, "Conjectures on Urban Form: The Cornell Urban Design Studio 1963-1982", *The Cornell Journal of Architecture* 2, Fall 1983, 54-78, pp. 142-143, note 3, p. 142.
5. ANY 7/8 (1994). George Baird, "Oppositions in the Thought of Colin Rowe", *Assemblage*, 33, August 1997, pp. 22-35; Joan Ockman, "Form without Utopia: Contextualising Colin Rowe", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 57, 4, Dec. 1998, pp. 448-456.
6. Mauro Marzo (ed), *L'architettura come testo e la figura di Colin Rowe*. Venezia, Marsilio, 2010.
7. Emmanuel Petit (ed), *Reckoning with Colin Rowe: Ten Architects Take Position*, New York/London, Routledge, 2015.
8. Rowe and Koetter, *College City*, p. 106.
9. Wayne Cooper, "The Figure/Grounds", *The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, 2, Fall 1983, pp. 42-53; and unnumbered plates. Stephen Hurtt, "Conjectures on Urban Form, The Cornell Urban Design Studio 1963-1982", *The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, 2, Fall 1983, pp. 54-78. D.B. Middleton, "The Combining of the Traditional City and the Modern City", *Lotus International*, 27, 1982, pp. 47-62. D.B. Middleton, "Studio Projects", *The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, 2, Fall 1983, pp. 78-141, spec.

78. This last contains a selection of studio work with commentary by D.B. Middleton. Excerpts from that 1983 presentation then found their way into the third volume of Rowe's collected writings. See Colin Rowe, *As I Was Saying. Recollections and Miscellaneous Essays, Volume Three Urbanistics*, Alexander Caragionne (ed.). Cambridge/Mass, The MIT Press, 1996, published as "Cornell Studio Projects and Theses", pp. 5-86, under the joint names Colin Rowe and D.B. Middleton with additional commentary by Rowe.

10. In a future study, it would be useful to further qualify the pedagogical structure including review of such aspects as studio size, the relation of studio work to Rowe's lectures in history, and the frequency of studio projects per year and across the degree. It would also be of interest to determine the level of studio brief detail and assessment items assigned. This later would extend in future phases of this research to determining if textual responses were also part of the submission requirements, such details being outside the scope and material resources of the present study.

11. Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*, pp. 168-171.

12. Hurr, "Conjectures on Urban Form", p. 56

13. Rowe and Middleton, "Cornell Studio Projects," p. 11.

14. Rowe, *As I was Saying*, Volume Three, p. 100.

15. Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*, pp. 78-79.

16. Colin Rowe, "The Present Urban Predicament", *The Architectural Association Quarterly*, 12/4, 1979, pp. 40-63, being the Cubitt Lecture given at the Royal Institution London, on 18 June 1979.

17. Rowe and Koetter *Collage City*, pp. 156-159.

18. Peter Eisenman, *Urgency Part 2. Lecture*, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal, 8 June 2007, 10:50 minutes. Source: <https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/events/2681/urgency-2007-rem-koolhaas-and-peter-eisenman>, accessed 30-09-2018.

19. Peter Eisenman, "The Rowe Synthesis", in *L'architettura come testo e la figura di Colin Rowe*, edited by Mauro Marzocchi. Venezia: Marsilio, 2010, pp. 49-58.

20. Peter Eisenman, "Unit 1104a. Venice Project I - Alvise Cornaro and the Venetian Laguna", Yale School of Architecture, 2009, unpublished architecture studio outline; Peter Eisenman, "Unit 1106a. Venice Project II - Le Corbusier and the Visionary's Venice", Yale School of Architecture, 2010, unpublished architecture studio outline. Peter Eisenman, "Unit 1104a. Venice Project III - Figure/Disfigure," Yale School of Architecture (2011), unpublished architecture studio outline. Though unpublished, summary details for each of the three Venice Project studios can be found in respective issue of *Retrospecta*, an annual journal of student work and activities of the Yale School of Architecture. See "Venice Project I", in Con Vu Bui, Christos C. Bolos, Justin Trigg and Diana Nee (eds.), *Retrospecta 2009-2010*, New Haven, Yale School of Architecture, 2010, pp. 34-37; "Venice Project II", in Amy Kessler, Edward Hsu, Yasemin Tarhan (eds.), *Retrospecta 2010-2011*, New Haven, Yale School of Architecture, 2011, pp. 44-45; "Venice Project III", in Tyler Collins, Leeland McPhail, Evan Wiskup (eds.), *Retrospecta 2011-2012*, New Haven, Yale School of Architecture, 2012, pp. 47-48 and 137-138.

21. Eisenman, *Venice Project I*, unpublished studio outline. The notion of *détournement* is defined by Guy Debord in his *Society of the Spectacle* as 'the antithesis of quotation'. For Eisenman, one aim of the studio was to transcribe this idea into an architectural device of 'overlay', one which he proposes differs from or is more than a simple technique of montage or collage. (Eisenman, *Venice Project I*, unpublished studio outline) See Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, New York, Zone Books, 1995.

22. Eisenman, *Venice Project I*, partially reproduced in "Venice Project I," 34.

23. Eisenman, *Venice Project III*, unpublished studio outline.

24. Eisenman, *Venice Project II*, unpublished studio outline. The polarity *disegno*, drawing or design more generally with an emphasis on line as the basis of composition, and *colore*, or colouring with an implied reliance on patches of colour or shape as the beginning, has a long tradition and is

typically formulated in art historical contexts as geographically differentiated. Eisenman places artists from Renaissance Florence on the side of *disegno*, Venetian artists of the same period on the side of *colore*.

25. Eisenman, *Venice Project I*, unpublished studio outline, s.p., partially reproduced in "Venice Project I," 35.

26. Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*, p. 149.

27. Rowe and Koetter *Collage City*, pp. 156-159.

ABSTRACTS

This paper undertakes a comparative analysis of Colin Rowe (1920-1999) and Peter Eisenman's (1932-) studio teaching as a form of theoretical practice. It does this through examination of select studios undertaken under their respective direction at Cornell University and the Yale School of Architecture. Three propositions underpin the paper. First, that a close reading of Rowe's teaching reveals a specific theoretical temperament at work. Second, the paper postulates that the latent force of Rowe's teaching is still to be fully exploited. Third, the paper suggests that one possible legacy can be seen in the studio teaching of Eisenman, arguing that Eisenman's teaching practice and the variations on certain devices and strategies deployed by Rowe can be taken as an instance of the latter's transformative potential.

A series of questions are posed to address these propositions: Which kinds of architectural-urban problems did Rowe emphasize in his studio teaching? What concepts and composition devices were called up? What happens in the transmission and transfer through students, and the singular student of Peter Eisenman in particular? Through an analysis of their university studio teaching, the paper seeks to reveal instances of teaching practices that promote singular theoretical models, different problematics, and various composition strategies and devices which it is claimed are distinguished by their embrace of ambiguity, complexity, and multiplicity.

The paper makes a contribution to scholarship on the ideas and impact of Rowe's teaching, revealing a generative latency largely ignored in secondary literature to date. It adds to studies of twentieth-century architecture education and opens a line of research around a little studied aspect of Eisenman's practice.

Cet article propose une analyse comparative de l'enseignement en studio de Colin Rowe (1920-1999) et de Peter Eisenman (1932 -) en tant que forme de pratique théorique. Pour ce faire, il examine certains enseignements de studio menés sous leur direction respective à la Cornell University et à la Yale School of Architecture. Trois axes d'analyse sous-tendent le propos. Premièrement, une lecture attentive de l'enseignement de Rowe révèle une posture théorique caractéristique de son travail. Deuxièmement, nous postulons que la force potentielle de l'enseignement de Rowe doit encore être pleinement exploitée. Troisièmement, l'article suggère qu'un héritage possible apparaît à travers l'enseignement en studio d'Eisenman, affirmant que sa pratique d'enseignement et les variations de certains dispositifs et stratégies déployés par Rowe peuvent être considérées comme un exemple de sa capacité de transformation.

Une série de questions sont posées pour répondre à ces propositions: quels types de problématiques architecturales et urbaines Rowe a-t-il mis en évidence dans son enseignement en studio ? Quels concepts et dispositifs de composition ont été ici convoqués ? Que se passe-t-il à travers la transmission et le transfert de ses enseignements à ses étudiants, et en particulier à

son élève Peter Eisenman ? À travers une analyse de leurs enseignements en studio universitaire, le document tente de révéler des exemples de pratiques pédagogiques favorisant des modèles théoriques singuliers, différentes problématiques, et diverses stratégies et dispositifs de composition qui se distinguent par leur ambiguïté, leur complexité et leur multiplicité.

Le document apporte une contribution à la recherche sur les idées et l'impact de l'enseignement de Rowe, révélant une potentialité féconde largement ignorée dans la littérature secondaire à ce jour. Elle s'ajoute aux études sur l'enseignement de l'architecture du XX^e siècle et ouvre une ligne de recherche autour d'un aspect méconnu de la pratique d'Eisenman.

INDEX

Mots-clés: Éducation architecturale, Figure, Fond, Peter Eisenman, Colin Rowe

Keywords: Architecture education, figure, ground, Peter Eisenman, Colin Rowe

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