

~ STATEMENT OF PURPOSE ~

The 21st century exists in a decentralized network of cities, buildings, and people in multiple states of construction, demolition, and reconstruction. The Architecture of the United Nations (A-UN) represents this new world scale and its emerging international order in built form. Within a shared cultural context the vital role of architects to shape a sustainable peace will be demonstrated.

The purpose of this hands-on presentation and open-source exchange of ideas and information is to foster interdisciplinary conversations and critical debates of architecture as a conceptual tool for understanding and engaging current events. This is a chance to spark new relations between the networks of people gathered.

The A-UN research will be creatively and interactively presented based upon the goals, levels of focus, and interdisciplinary participation of a given audience. The research itself, already conducted, can be delivered in an adaptable format ranging from a short lecture to several days of conversation.

Audiovisual recordings, computer slides, whiteboards, real-time sketches, and online resources will be used in demonstrations, as will EMF meters, electronic sensors, and other artifacts. Nearby buildings and outdoor environments will also contribute readily tangible examples that can facilitate discussions.

-= PROJECT CONTEXT =-

The ideas outlined in this proposal originated as an unintended consequence of independent studies conducted in the early 1990s. What was an interdisciplinary search for architectural meaning became increasingly, uncannily infrastructural. The A-UN concept pulled together a confluence of different events, most notably:

- * sculptures utilizing the common iconography of utility poles and streetlights.
- * analysis of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) and its telecommunications as locally representative of the United Nations in built form.
- * consideration of the text *On the Archaeology of the Development Idea* by Wolfgang Sachs in terms of electrification and modernization in world development patterns.

Subsequent investigations built within this inclusive context and new scale:

<u>Themes</u>	international aesthetics, 18th-21st century archaeology (esp. Sir John Soane), infrastructural development, architectural philosophy.
<u>Theses</u>	<i>The Architecture of Electricity, Seeing Cyberspace (2G), Electromagnetic Architecture, Mapping the E-Assemblage.</i>
<u>Projects</u>	Architexturez/Glossalalia, The Aesthetics of Deconstruction, Public Energy Network, Electronetwork.org, The Electromagnetic Assemblage.
<u>Works</u>	maps, debates, drawings, essays, jewelry, sculpture, installation.

The A-UN project has remained, until recently, outside public consideration. This situation changed on 9/11 with the actions of an architectural student (Atta) and contractor (bin Laden). The institution of architecture has yet to respond with its strategic imagination to contribute to 21st century peace.

-= GENERAL PLAN =-

0. The Architecture of the United Nations:
Transforming Wars of Ideas through Networks of Peace
1. Stirling: Shared Futures built of Many Pasts
- Modernity, Archaeology, Architecture - [a]
2. Aesthetics: Representations of the United Nations
- Artifacts, Assemblages, Excavations - [b]
3. Infrastructures: Evidence of Common Foundations
- Tools, Buildings, Systems - [c]
4. Cultures: Transformation within Invisible Networks
- Economic, Social, Political - [d]
5. Realities: Reason beyond Dogmatic Ideologies
- Language, Logic, Identity - [e]
6. Education: Creative Disciplines and Empirical Knowledge
- Research, Design, Development - [f]
7. Architecture: Civic Duty and Ethical Responsibility
- Humans, Environments, Technologies - [g]
8. Relationships: Strategic Imagination and New Diplomacies
- Values, Standards, Goals - [h]
9. Civilization: Engaging improbable States of Affairs
- Scale, Organization, Exchange - [i]
10. Challenges: Experiments questioning Modern Traditions
- Terrorism, Security, Development - [j]

-- RESEARCH NOTES --

**SECTION 0. The Architecture of the United Nations:
Transforming Wars of Ideas through Networks of Peace**

Project origins, aims, and a synopsis through "The Structure of Terror" pyramid diagram from *The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, U.S. Department of State. [see Figure 1] (ref. Lewis Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine*)

SECTION 1. Stirling: Shared Futures built of Many Pasts

Recognition of the work of James Stirling, inspirational and key to questioning place, suspended between its archaic and cosmopolitan dimensions and qualities.

Sketch a: Modernity, Archaeology, Architecture

The Neue Staatsgalerie museum enables perception of modern development in a shared archaeological and architectural perspective. Evident connections between the pre-modern, modern, and post-modern help decipher origins of new traditions. (cf. Herbert Muschamp on archaeology, modernism, and the preservation movement)

SECTION 2. Aesthetics: Representations of the United Nations

Exploration of typological representations at the scale of human civilization, investigating everyday landscapes, buildings, and machines. (cf. Paul Shephard)

Sketch b: Artifacts, Assemblages, Excavations

Distributed collections of universal artifacts excavated in developing contexts demonstrate a new world scale. (ref. *The Aesthetics of Deconstruction*) Industrial archaeology reveals international infrastructures in local contexts; such as shipping containers as symbolic artifacts representing global trade by relating labor, markets, ports, ships, trucks, stores, merchandise, and people.

SECTION 3. Infrastructures: Evidence of Common Foundations

Overview of infrastructures (e.g. communications, energy, transportation) in developing new world relations founded upon earlier architectural traditions. [see Figure 2]

Sketch c: Tools, Buildings, Systems

Methods to conceptually map diverse components of infrastructural order reveal interconnections in local and global environments and facilitate complex understandings. (ref. Mapping the E-Assemblage) Maps of 'cyberspace' offer an example for seeing 'how things work' today. [see Figure 3] (ref. Yona Friedman, *Towards a Scientific Architecture*) (cf. David McCauley, Thomas P. Hughes)

SECTION 4. **Cultures: Transformation within Invisible Networks**

Recognition of a material culture changing natural, artificial, and virtual environments through an automation of development. (ref. *The Architecture of Electricity*)

Sketch d: Economic, Social, Political

Visualizing abstract processes defines cultural conditions and a world context for common infrastructures. (ref. *Seeing Cyberspace*) With increased awareness dynamic relations can be 'seen', e.g. between nuclear energy, nuclear weapons, and nuclear war. [see Figure 4] (cf. Lewis Mumford)

SECTION 5. **Realities: Reason beyond Dogmatic Ideologies**

Collaborative architecture and its entrapment in cultural wars of competing ideas, proprietary aesthetics, new media techniques, and rhetorical language.

Sketch e: Language, Logic, Identity

Admission of paradox in logical consideration allows an integration of views now differentiated in public and private languages. Venn diagram techniques are a tool for communicating beyond 'theorism', enabling conceptual reasoning for addressing fundamental issues blockading collaboration through divided mindsets. (cf. C.P. Snow, Marshall McLuhan, Deleuze & Guattari, Plato)

SECTION 6. **Education: Creative Disciplines and Empirical Knowledge**

Architectural education is potentially exemplar for empirical interdisciplinary knowledge grounded in strategic practice, versus training of new metaphysicians. (ref. René Magritte, *The Empire of Light, The Treachery of Images*)

Sketch f: Research, Design, Development

Limitations of studio-based curriculums are reached in aesthetic evaluations of architectural-engineering by specialists. (non seq. Le Corbusier & Walter Gropius) The threshold is the experimental laboratory, customized to open up questioning. (ref. Nicholas Negroponte, *Wired* magazine and MIT Media Lab)

SECTION 7. **Architecture: Civic Duty and Ethical Responsibility**

A public ownership of architecture is lost to a private mastery of 'the client,' and creates a potential tool for oppression and exploitation without oversight. (cf. "The price of greatness is responsibility" - Sir Winston Churchill)

Sketch g: Humans, Environments, Technologies

Reinvigorating the public domains of architecture requires peer review of explorations and methods for understanding. (cf. Venturi, Scott-Brown, Izenour) Architecture is for people, primarily, not machines alone. Related issues can no longer be ignored, including: energy efficiency, climate change, pollution, mass transit, urban sprawl, building safety, and cultural devolution. (ref. Morrish and Brown, *Infrastructure for the New Social Covenant*)

SECTION 8. **Relationships: Strategic Imagination and New Diplomacies**

The substantial implication of renewed institutional and individual legitimacy in meeting strategic challenges with cultural imagination is peaceful change. (ref. Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Relational Architecture*)

Sketch h: Values, Standards, Goals

Architectural reason can negotiate multiple vantages by recontextualizing questions in terms of shared needs, purpose, and outcomes. A benefit of conceding imperfection is to prioritize improvements and opportunities for actively responding to core issues and root causes now in extreme imbalance. (ref. Natsios Young Architects, Cartome.org & Cryptome.org)

SECTION 9. **Civilization: Engaging improbable States of Affairs**

Perceptions of universality in natural, artificial, and virtual environments, beyond paradox, reveal a new world order emerging from chaotic 20th century cities. (ref. The United States, The United Nations, and The International Community)

Sketch i: Scale, Organization, Exchange

With humans as standard of measurement the world is simultaneously one and many, both a group and an individual, allowing coherent evaluation of globalism, urbanism, and development patterns from multiple perspectives and values. As a result differences can be bridged, diverse modes facilitated, and longstanding dichotomies overcome such as managing overlapping public and private agendas. [see Figure 5] (ex. Social Capital) (ref. Public Energy Network)

SECTION 10. **Challenges: Experiments questioning Modern Traditions**

Architecture is a critical factor in shaping current events through large-scale transformations of culture. To do so requires increased cultural investment and civic support of the core discipline from citizens, businesses, and governments. (ex. Reconstruction in New York City, Afghanistan, and Iraq)

Sketch j: Terrorism, Security, Development

The ability to adapt to change is key to the present and future relevance of architecture. The tragic consequence of censorship of critical questioning in ideological 'wars of ideas' is ignorance which serves a bureaucracy of machines. To challenge and transform existing patterns requires more accurate states of architectural representation to provide foundations for building towards peace. (ex. sensor networks) (cf. Makrolab, ETOY, Architectural Painters) (ref. Segal and Weizman, *A Civilian Occupation*)

-= VERDICT =-

These interdisciplinary conversations are paramount to transcend existing vantages of world order, allowing strategic questions, options, and imaginations - now otherwise inaccessible.