In the past two parts of this cumulative diagramming assignment I have focused on developing an understanding of the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio through the strategies appropriated in defining its form, and the subsequent effects and relationships that the result form has on the subject. In the following, I would like to revisit some of the diagrams and claims I generated in the past components and through a fresh layer of diagrams and verbiage attempt to uncover a new strata of information and assertions related to the underlying techniques and devices responsible for the effects produced by Peter Eisenman’s use of variable grids, figuration, and fragmentation within the Wexner Center.

The literal use of the rotated grid is used by Eisenman as an extensive method of giving the architecture its own voice. The identification of the dialectic grids stems from conditions that exist at the boundary of the site, Eisenman then grafts one grid on top of the other and seeks potential connections or ‘event sites’ at the urban, local, and interior scales. Scalar operations are performed as a means of mediating the scale of the urban grid towards a pedestrian or human scale, lastly, the results of these operations serves as a map that is used to locate program, pathways, structure, interior forms, excavations, and views along the newly afforded possibilities of ‘event sites’ in both the horizontal and vertical planes.
The results of these operations are visible in almost every aspect of the construction, from the module in the curtainwall, the tiling of the pavers, planters and trees on site, the orientation of the lights bulkheads, beams, reveals, and ceiling tiles within the building.

To add to the depth of possibilities afforded by this excavation of the immediate condition of the grid Eisenman grafts figured scaffolding onto the site and integrates this figure into the primary circuit or pathway of the building. This figuration of scaffolding represents an intensive manipulation of the grid. The scaffolding is scaled to represent the module of the grid that is interpretable at a human scale. The scaffold is reduced to its raw type, to the essential condition that signifies the essence of its existence that being an impermanent accessory to architecture that allows its construction, but does not necessarily shelter. This architecture of non-shelter is aligned directly adjacent to an interior pathway within the building that does enclose and protect. The result of this organization is a productive series of blurred event sites which run the course of the building. The subject as pedestrian within the external arcade has no choice but to reflect on time, space, and location when moving through this narrow event space as they are exposed to the external elements of weather which are intensified by the narrow width of the pathway and its increasing or decreasing depth as it transitions between two planes. This results in a feedback loop within the subject as
the architecture of non-architecture (or architectural possibility) is projected back onto the subject, who entrapped in this externalized component of the network of the building, is forced to succumb to a system of control which dictates movement and orientation yet mercilessly does not does not assuage the need for enclosure.

The third design device executed by Eisenman is the fragmentation of the armoury. This technique of mutation of form can be interpreted as an intensive abstraction of the rotation of grids. In this case the dialectic is not a literal grid, but a play on nostalgia through the fragmentary dislocation of an element through time. To successfully achieve this effect Eisenman identified the edifice that formerly inhabited the site, the archetype is then subjected to a recursive operation that strips of its tactile fidelity, and much of its autonomous identity resulting in a formal gesture which distances the subject from the physical reality of its original construction while at the same time allowing the massing of the structure to impart convictions upon the subject of the political and cultural attitudes of its existence. To reinforce and intensify the distance in time which separates then and now, the massing of the armoury is literally dissected into a series of fragmented parts. One series of these fragments are connected with a dark curtain wall, which perhaps is itself indicative of the gaps that occur in the human body when retrieving memories. The second series are manifest purely in the x-y plane as a trace of the foundation of the former structure. Both series can be read as 'cool' in McLuhan terms because the subject is required to engage in the abstraction to project internally the missing pieces as a means of completing the vision of the armoury, a process which opens doors to understanding more about the time and space in which it operated.

In revisiting the design devices that Eisenman used in the design of the Wexner Center for the Arts is has been possible to determine that much of the abstraction of form derives itself from co-related processes. Initiated by a series of processes which appropriate and manipulate 'rotate' the coordinates of the urban and pedestrian, horizontal and vertical, and the past and the present Eisenman produces three very distinctive extensive and intensive operations of shifting, figuring, fragmenting that coalesce into an engaging ecology for the celebration of creative thought.
Works Cited


