

## DISSENT AND LET SIMMER

Deo Deiparine  
M. Arch I, 2020

São Paulo wears its people's dissent on its buildings. As a reflection of this, University of São Paulo's Faculty for Architecture and Urbanism (FAU-USP), designed by Vilanova Artigas, carries generations of student graffiti on its bare concrete walls. The stark roof volume works like a blinder between the school and its surrounding context. And yet, the school's central atrium feels closer to the rest of the city than its surroundings—the enclave formed by the university's campus—thanks in part to its free-flowing plan but also to the candid contributions in ink, paint, and paste-up decorating its halls. Several of the messages display the locally grown *pixação* style of tagging, a script developed specifically with the aims of confronting the ugliness in Brazil's structural violence.<sup>1</sup> The building pays this attitude in kind through its coarsely executed board-formed walls, laying bare the construction capabilities of São Paulo's undertrained and underpaid work force.<sup>2</sup> Artigas brandishes the coarseness of the building's architecture as a frank admission of the heights of wealth accumulated only for Brazil's elite and not for its popular workforce.

The building's formal layout stages a democratic organization for the institution's activities. Despite the severity of the building's floating facade, its entryway slips into the building free of any bounded enclosure, leading into a plaza-like atrium around which the rest of the spaces gather. Even within the building, the interior programming largely remains open to one another, delineated only by distances, elevational changes, or partial height walls; the few exceptions being the glazed library and administrative spaces that face directly onto the atrium. Artigas notes that the gentle ramps circulating up through the building were designed so as to make the building feel as if it were one continuous floor, emphasizing the unity of the spaces within.<sup>3</sup> The resulting breezeway carries currents of political baggage in with the wind, depositing the grounded realities students live through along with the work accumulating at their desks. Artigas' stance expressed through the building is one of sheltered engagement, responding to the very real threats of violence from a repressive regime. The frankness of the building's walls invite a similar frankness in the various scrawlings, political or otherwise, deposited by the students. The exposition of generations of restless slogans construct a long memory of dissent, simmering until boiling over during boisterous political demonstrations that fill the open atrium.<sup>4</sup>

The FAU makes no illusions about the conditions which grant its existence. The democratic social arrangement formed by its huddled programming necessarily relies on a thick shell. It is a democracy culled from its context and cultivated in secret. Rather than a Modernity achieved, the building's structural poetics evoke an

immanent precarity for the building's destiny. Its gruff enshrouding details remind the building's users that its subversive and emancipatory potential remains provisional, conditional to the active cultivation of such a dreamed future. The building embodies Artigas' own politics. Shortly after the military coup in 1964, Artigas was arrested for communist affiliations. He would be cleared of charges but would pursue a practice in building institutions for the military regime, the building for FAU-USP being one of them. Such contradictions lie at the heart of questions he asked of himself and the discipline. In response to his students' growing militancy, he asked, "how can we make a revolution, without the... artistic vision needed of the world?"<sup>5</sup> Despite its contradictions, the school, with its collected writings on the walls, stands to make its case.

1 The recent *Paprika!* Vol. 5, Issue 14 featured *Pixação* type, stating, "while graffiti writers in the United States 'paint' or 'tag', *Pichadores* 'crush' and 'destroy.'"   
2 Williams, Richard. "Brazil's Brutalisms Past and Future Decay at the FAU-USP" in *Neo-avant-garde and Postmodern: Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2011), 103-122.   
3 Ibid. 112.   
4 See José Moscardi's 1969 photograph of a student demonstration inside FAU-USP's central hall. [https://buellcenter.columbia.edu/drupal/web/sites/default/files/inline-images/tumblr\\_or32bczE01s-4d0e9c1\\_544.jpg](https://buellcenter.columbia.edu/drupal/web/sites/default/files/inline-images/tumblr_or32bczE01s-4d0e9c1_544.jpg)   
5 León, Ana Maria. "Designing Dissent" in *Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence* (London, Routledge, 2014), 93.

## SKEPTICISM

Camille Chabrol  
M. Arch I, 2020

When I first read the topic for this issue of *Paprika!*, it filled me with anxiety. As I near the end of my architecture education, I realize that I still have no idea what this dash of something special could be. Is it the underlying formal geometry? Is it the aesthetic experience? Is it the spatial variable? Will I ever know? It seems that every time I think I know what it might be, I learn something new about architecture that changes my whole perspective on what that "secret ingredient" is.

Besides step 5, "add a dash of \_\_\_\_\_", the recipe offered in the prompt makes a lot of sense, and got me wondering, *why isn't architecture taught in that way?* As a series of steps to follow, a methodology of sorts. Couldn't design studios be set up like methods seminars? Where you are exposed to a series of approaches to solving problems, as well as their strengths and limitations, and try them out for yourself on your projects.

Instead, the education of architects is filled with mystery. It's true that there is no straight path towards gaining the knowledge you will need. You might learn something in a computational design seminar or a composition course that solves the problem you were scratching your head about during last semester's studio project. But then again you would have never been able to arrive at that knowledge if you hadn't taken last semester's studio in the first place! It's a catch-22. You only start to gain a sense of the full picture years after your first design studio. And even then, you might have an idea of the pieces, but not always how to put them together. The recipe described so clearly in this *Paprika!* issue takes years of trial and error, of fumbling and bumbling to arrive at.

An added level of enigma further exacerbates the confusion created by this non-linear form of acquiring knowledge. Architects are encouraged to present clear arguments, but not to reveal their cards. The idea of using a recipe or methodology is contrary to everything we are told about making Great Architecture. Many architects would refuse to admit to using a recipe.

Perhaps the confusion arises because for every architect, the recipe is different. What changes from architect to architect is not so much the dash of something special, but rather the order and quantities of all ingredients involved. As you gain more experience and knowledge, you add and subtract from that recipe. Some pieces of information will cause you to throw the recipe out altogether. Then there is the question of gaining knowledge but not knowing what to do with it—knowing you want your architecture to incorporate this new knowledge but not knowing how to do it.

What makes architecture special is its ability to grapple with and integrate a variety of ingredients that do not necessarily make sense together. Maybe we shouldn't be looking for this "special ingredient," but instead focus on mastering many different recipes.

## ON THE GROUND

**Monday, April 13:** In what is possibly the only silver lining of Yale's classes going digital, the School of Art beams in Tilda Swinton for a guest lecture and sends shockwaves of FOMO across Instagram.

**Tuesday, April 14:** At a "How I Handled a Recession" panel, Kai-Uwe Bergmann asks if we've ever heard of a book called "On the Road" by an author called Jack Kerouac, advising we pick up a copy—and "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance"—and just travel.

**Thursday, April 16:** In an unexpected correspondence from the Chair of the Design Committee, Mark Foster Gage, students are informed that portfolio review will not occur this year due to the "undue burden" of having to find, edit and organize files remotely. In Gage's words "you do not need to do anything." Good thing we're all experts at that now.

**Friday, April 17:** Mario Carpo zooms into Eisenman and Forster's Renaissance & Modern II seminar from London for the second week in a row—just because he can.

**Tuesday, April 21:** At the conclusion of BP, Sam Golini signs off to the 63-person audience of his peers and professors by offering a moving performance of Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young's "Our House."

Students start to get sloppy with their Zoom etiquette in Elihu Rubin's Ghost Towns seminar. Unintentional screen shares reveal what's actually happening on students' desktops, and a failure-to-mute blunder exposes an overly-enthusiastic conversation about the weather.

## A DASH OF

This issue is a myth; it is a story, a fairytale, an illusion. It's somewhere between a build-your-own narrative and a *Get Rich Quick* self-help book. It is a simple recipe that would be the end-all of design if only we knew what the secret ingredient was. Yet the answer is elusive and individual. If we knew exactly what made design "good," then a healthy retirement at age 62 would conclude our careers. Perhaps it's the grueling yet life-giving process of searching for certainty which drives us and gives value to what we do.

The collection of writing here represents a range of views about this process. From personal reflections on design, to the necessity of the political sphere and the value of the undefinable. The "secret ingredient" might in fact be the struggle to find one in the first place, and writing the recipe, again and again, is what most fulfills us.

1. Choose a site. Note that size may affect flavor.
2. In a separate space, perhaps a computer or a piece of paper, combine all site context with all code requirements.
3. Gently fold in two parts structure with one-part enclosure into the existing composition. Mix until a reconcilable texture is achieved.
4. Pour the mixture onto the site. At this point, the mixture might curdle. A few things can fix this: Repeat steps 2-3, or massage the mixture until the desired texture is achieved.
5. Add a dash of \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Let bake for a few days, months, or years. Continue to reassess and make necessary adjustments until desired architecture is constructed.
7. Garnish with landscape.

## GLASS

Tobi Kassim

Breathing and its inaccurate copies, being beating. i try stillness to isolate the feeling of space's emptiness. like a second skin not to lose hollowness to the boundless dispersal

of matter around me  
if i could really soak that shit in. it's a different color of quiet against the vacuum in me trying to reflect. a test of absorption. stains in

different depths on similar surfaces  
the close density of our availability is rhythmic and open to pervasion

when i say we i mean the difference between me and the whole world congealed thickly in a structure of otherness projected chocolate. i can be quite thin

and admit porous limits between my emptiness in the spaces i've filled. but i want now to stop bleeding, please. do you see yet how this weave could form a gauze for us?

i'm trying too. not to speak to not be emptied to smear the specks of unspeakable content over more of me inside

for closeness texturally  
to air's thinness. intervals of imperceptible

touch. where i'm different just enough to be split open. then merged.

## PAPRIKA!

Vol. 5, Issue 19

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## DOGS

The Dean's List

P Weimaraner  
7 Rescue Dog  
6 Mutt  
5 Yellow Lab  
4 Standard Poodle  
B Saluki  
SB Leonberger

"I love dogs. Own two rescued weimaraners, grew up with a huge black poodle without a hairdo."

## PAELLA

Trattie Davies

You are paella.

Paella makes no sense. Nobody even agrees what goes inside. The range is overwhelming, wasteful!

Snails, Sausage, Rice, Green Beans, Rabbit, Chicken, "sometimes duck," Clams, Mussels, Lobster, Rosemary Branches, Artichoke Hearts?, Onions, Shrimp, Paprika, Olive Oil, Chorizo, Bamba?, Calasparra? Special Names for Special Rice. Saffron, the single costliest spice on earth.

Livestock, seafood, things from the air, things from the earth, things from the water.

Who thought this up? The sequence, the container, the heat, the quantity of food, when do the mussels open? Why would you put a lobster in a group setting? Each of these creatures and substances, hundreds of lifetimes in aggregate, with all their little worlds to make them just so, only once, never to be repeated, a hundred miracles, millennia of evolution, fate, chance, destiny all chucked recklessly, fearlessly? into one hyper specific pan.

What is the special ingredient? Who knows. It's everything all together, all at once. It's all special. It's all amazing. It's all overwhelming. Possibly stupid. You have to try.

## MERCURY

Tobi Kassim  
M.A. English Lit, 2019

Or don't you see through me  
yet? i'm openly holding nothing to prove

being with the things we're in. this old

transparency i can't write from to come  
to grips with silence. or find a pause in its continuity

it should break off  
itself for a  
fragment of the future's  
peculiarity. the dream of a more  
fluid world or streams  
of time with stones in it. separators

and unbroken flow. it takes stoppage  
to show i'm a place

I'm going too. beading my way  
toward like mitosis along  
a string. breeding illusions of my  
constancy. every day materializes

a new vacancy a desire

for coherence. the horizon turns over and  
the split cells of our becoming  
roll back  
to the edges  
that made us. coming together

traces capacity. every day's  
colors swirl to the brim. dance but

don't quite run together. so when we spill  
over our limits time slips  
its loop as a bracelet. so only slivers of light

tell unmoored moments apart. a platform

to reach the next time i separate  
where the light can touch itself too

## DISBELIEF

Katie Lau  
M. Arch I, 2020

I'm much better at cooking than baking for the same reasons that I'll never be a sensitive and minimal designer. I cannot measure the perfectly proportioned elements ahead of time and combine them in an elegant rhythm. I have to figure it out as I go, make decisions with, perhaps, not enough careful consideration, and address the consequences later. Turmeric will probably go with this? We'll see. Several times I've made the mistake of setting out on a design problem in a 100% pragmatic state of mind. In these instances, I was prepared to carefully consider the needs of every contextual element and stakeholder simultaneously. But this mindset makes me cautious and uncreative. It prevents me from doing, and makes my objects too precious to ever be worth anything. Jurors aren't upset with these projects, but they don't find them interesting either. All of my best projects (at least to me, and right now I'm the only one who has to eat my own cooking, besides Andrew) start with some suspension of disbelief—allowing myself to do something strange, ridiculous, or confrontational, and then figuring it out from there. My studio critic and I briefly ignore the fact that my first design intuition will never be built, that it's entangled with elements that architects have no control over, or that it makes its occupants' lives more difficult to prove a point.

Each semester inevitably reaches the point where I have to reckon with my suspended disbelief and make the project actually work (or, at least, a studio level of working). At this point, things get worse—much worse. But at the moment when an unresolved idea collides with a poorly placed fire stair in an illogical pile that I can hardly stand to look at any longer, I know that things are about to get better. My projects always follow the same pattern: a promising idea blossoms, crashes and burns, and then is slowly resolved from the mess. Every decent project of mine tends to get worse before it gets better. If it never gets worse, the idea wasn't worth struggling with in the first place. I cook because baking doesn't get worse before it gets better; it requires precision from the start. Once it's in the oven, you can only cross your fingers. In cooking, you build flavor, taste and correct. Even if you add too much salt, you can always add more of everything else.

I wonder about the consequences of my process in the real world. When actual lives stand to be affected by your work, you should be pragmatic and sensitive to their needs. You should think before you do. I don't know what to make of the fact that my most sensitive project is a vanilla cake snooze fest. One of the guest critics on this particular vanilla cake review told me he could see my project being built, and he meant that as an insult. Maybe I'll get better at baking, but in my seven years of architecture school, I've learned that my design process is *Chopped*, not *The Great British Baking Show*.

## TRANSFORMATION

Leo Fuchs  
M. Arch II, 2020

“A doctor received a visit from one of his friends. ‘How is your illness, my friend,’ was his first question. ‘How should it be? I am dying of improvement, pure and simple!’  
— Immanuel Kant,  
*The Conflict of Faculties*

Beyond materializing and formalizing for a time, architecture has always framed a subject of its Zeitgeist to inhabit its forms. Modern humanist subjectivity, largely grounded in individuation and national identities, was constructed as one of stability and which, through its cognitive capacities, would struggle to control the world of its being. A will to power over a world that seemed utterly colonizable by a homogenizing grid of production and consumption, reproduced at an unprecedented scale under the egis of betterment through the reforms of architecture. Now that we are dying of improvement, it is time to find out what we choose to incrementally build on and what we choose to not reproduce. It becomes essential for a subjectivity of architecture to dissolve the binaries that formed the blank canvas on which modernity was drawn.

A subject can be defined and redefined by its negative. It cannot rely on the stasis of being, but rather a continuous process of transformation, which is a fundamental character of the condition of predicament we live in.<sup>1</sup> The necessity of defining a subject for architecture with its necessary complexities was clear before and becomes even more urgent after the trauma of the worldwide pandemic we are immersed in, which, despite its universality, impacts the world in unequal ways. The subject of architecture can be framed by new forms of universality in order to resist a principle of individuation, which figurally objectifies and separates. And despite the formation of a whole, it can be assembled and transformed, “rejecting a rearrangement of elements in hierarchical order”.<sup>2</sup> A careful investigation of its subject is a missing necessity part with which architecture can become whole and overcome the dialectics of modern thought.

Architects rarely think about the possibility of failure of the grid that structures its subject under conditions of perceived normality. When the grid is stressed and lockdown imposes itself as a radical universal condition, architecture becomes a broken hammer, throwing light on shouting disparities and growing polarizing inequities. In this condition, architects will have to face the urging disparities. Architecture has the potential to “play a modest but useful part in facilitating a tolerable future for humanity as a whole and for all its different parts(...) inasmuch as a clear and vivid sense of the whole human past can help to soften future conflicts by making clear what we all share.”<sup>3</sup>

The impacts of lockdown in everyday life are powerful. Streets become desert, labor camps, schools

and prisons are emptied, luxury hotels become centers of treatment and the metropolis, the center of consumption and accumulation suddenly becomes strangely void. Lockdown exposes an incapacity to recognize the effects of its architecture as a totality. Still, the condition of anomaly has the power to revert systems of hierarchy with enormous speed and the effects of radical crisis can become a vehicle for change and a time to rethink the subject of architecture. The other, a non-human agent, can spark a rebirth as it did in other periods of human history. “Where it was, the Ich—the subject (...) must come into existence”<sup>4</sup> through the means and conditions of possibility formed by architecture.

In times of crisis, the necessity of a deep transformation of the subject we are becomes clear, in order for architecture to support better ways of living together. Architecture can be a potent critical vehicle for a shift from a subject grounded in the care of the self toward one framed by a logic of the care of the other as an animator of collective assemblages. In this process of transformation, it is a common task to reframe the architectural subject and redefine what we are capable of becoming. We can start by asking ourselves what we want to leave behind.

1 Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Anthropocene Time,” *History and Theory*, vol. 57, no. 1 (March 2018), pp. 29  
2 Massimo Cacciari, *Architecture and Nihilism*, p. 47  
3 William H. McNeill, “The Changing Shape of World History,” in *World History: Ideologies, Structures, and Identities*, ed. Philip Pomper, Richard A. Elphick, and Richard T. Vann (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 39–40.  
4 Jacques Lacan, “On the Network of Signifiers,” in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, transl. Alan Sheridan, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller [1973] (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1977), pp. 45.

## AMBIGUITY

Michael Glassman  
M. Arch I, 2020

I don't really think that a hamburger is a sandwich. I've floated this argument only to close friends, people whom I feel I can trust. They have all torn me to pieces. Because despite the many unifying qualities of the sandwich, it's very definition is a point of contention. While other foods spawn arguments over who made it first and where, or who makes it best and how, the sandwich debate remains stuck on a simpler question: what is it?

Everyone has an opinion about what defines a sandwich, but the truth is that no one really knows. Pointing this out to people, however, does not seem to soothe them. Claiming that in place of any one definition, you have chosen to champion this ambiguity as your guiding philosophy in sandwiches and in life, only seems to anger them more. So this is what I have done. I have decided that my two greatest passions in life, sandwiches and architecture, are actually even better because I don't know exactly what they are; I only know when they taste good.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that a hamburger is too specific to be a sandwich. Indeed in its very specificity it merits an entire category of its own; the square to the sandwich's rectangle. But it is precisely this specificity that makes me doubt its status as a ‘sandwich;’ that beautiful word that means everything and nothing.

In 2014, a friend named Evan, who once shared four (4) foot-long Wawa Gobblers with me in one sitting, sent me an article by Marianna Ritchey entitled, “Is This a Sandwich? Teaching the Platonic Dialogues through sandwiches.” In the article, Ritchey chronicles her journey teaching Plato to college students through the eyes of a bellicose friend who insists on dragging his loved ones into the sandwich debate. Her wonderful conclusion is that sandwiches might remind us to question the ways in which “our social practices, personal relationships, moral judgments, foreign policies, and political beliefs [are] based on foundations of “knowledge” that, when pressed, we can't even satisfactorily define or demonstrate.” “If we can't even define ‘sandwich,’” she writes, “how can we possibly presume to define ‘truth,’ or ‘justice,’ or ‘freedom?’”<sup>1</sup>

I would humbly add architecture to that list. But much like the sandwich, I find promise, not consternation, in the often futile quest to define the term, not because I think I'll ever really succeed, but because the ambiguity therein reminds me that I don't know much at all. This isn't to say that we throw our hands up; this is to say that we should be modest and thoughtful in the face of a complicated task. And it is my hope that each building I design is a better, more empathetic, more nuanced answer to the question than the last. While this may not always be the case, the pursuit is made possible by the space created between each definition of the thing. If we don't try to define all sandwiches at once, then each sandwich gets to put forth its own worldview. This doesn't mean that each sandwich itself is ambiguous. In fact, each sandwich should be resolute in its aim to feed, to nourish, to delight. In a world in which I generally believe that architects need to be much more explicit about what we do and for whom we do it, a dash of ambiguity goes a long way.

1 Dr. M. Ritchey, PhD, “Is This a Sandwich? Teaching the Platonic Dialogues through Sandwiches.” <https://medium.com/snack-lore/is-this-a-sandwich-50b1317e9b15>

## OTHER

Tobi Kassim  
M.A. English Lit, 2019

You again  
when i move closer  
you become texture  
and the room gets fuzzy  
i fracture back  
into myself for an  
image to dissolve  
my stable ground  
fall in the loss  
of how to tell space  
apart us  
from now  
light  
from  
inside

## ADDED VALUE

Francesco Battaini  
M. Arch, 2019, ETH Zürich  
& Felicia Liang  
M. Arch, 2020, KTH Stockholm

Anything that acts like a descriptor which grants people to make judgments and assumptions can make or break the perception of a building—with that being said, one of the more efficient ways to really rupture and create a hype with bated breath nowadays can be to originate an association to what is already being considered as a substance of value.

Where would Kourtney Kardashian be if it wasn't for Kim's tape? What would Egypt be without its pyramids? What would the Strelka Institute be without Rem Koolhaas educational programme?

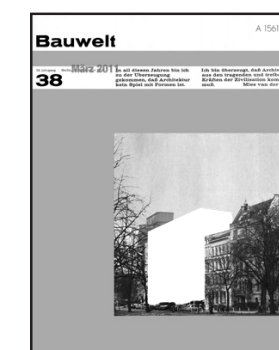
To translate the above on how a building could be distinguished, we have observed and discovered efficient ways to gain recognition in the form of name, context and dramaturgy.

Following are three mad libs which aim at understanding how projects are given an extra push to prominence (answers can be found below).

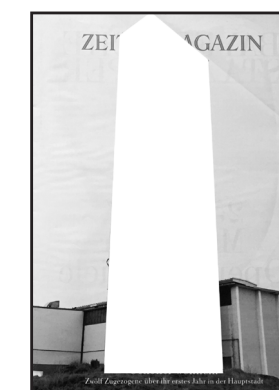
The rules are simple:

1. Select a template
2. Fill in the blank spaces
3. Select a suiting image option to paste in one of the covers
4. Spread the word and watch it gain momentum
5. All the above rules can be broken

DISCLAIMER: The mad libs should be used carefully as the results may be detrimental and cause unforeseeable harm. Play at your own risk...



\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
is situated in the city of Berlin, in an historic neighborhood between two buildings. The existing required \_\_\_\_\_ to reference to its two adjacent buildings, however, a fake design was made under the great \_\_\_\_\_' name to convince the Building Department to allow \_\_\_\_\_ to reference outside of its own context and draw inspiration from the \_\_\_\_\_ instead.



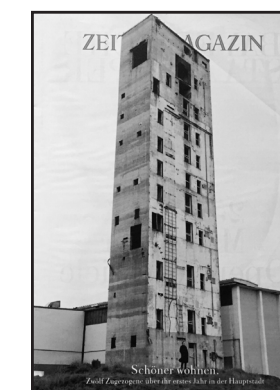
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
are the remnants of a \_\_\_\_\_. The former site has been demolished; only the \_\_\_\_\_ remained due to their high cost of demolition. \_\_\_\_\_ acquired a name in contrast to the lacklustre site. By associating them with the towers of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, their perception was altered—giving a new standard to the neighborhood.



\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
The \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the most photographed homes in \_\_\_\_\_. Perhaps the recognition is due to its \_\_\_\_\_ architecture, or, perhaps it is because it is associated to \_\_\_\_\_ and the place where \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_. The house plays a huge role in the narrative of the matter, leaving tourists to stop by everyday to pose for pictures.



51 \* 55, Berlin, 2012-, Brandhuber+  
51 \* 55 is situated in the city of Berlin, in an historic neighborhood between two buildings. The existing required 51 \* 55 to reference to its two adjacent buildings, however, a fake design was made under the great Mies van der Rohe' name to convince the Building Department to allow 51 \* 55 to reference outside of its own context and draw inspiration from the Neue National-galerie instead.



San Gimignano Lichtenberg, Berlin, 2011, Brandhuber+ Emde, Burlon  
Two concrete towers, are the remnants of a state-owned factory for graphite production. The former site has been demolished; only the two concrete towers remained due to their high cost of demolition. The towers acquired a name in contrast to the lacklustre site. By associating them with the towers of San Gimignano, Florence, their perception was altered—giving a new standard to the neighborhood.



Versace Mansion, Miami, 1930, Ronin Wolf  
The palace is one of the most photographed homes in America. Perhaps the recognition is due to its extravagant taste and Mediterranean revivalist architecture, or, perhaps it is because it is associated to Versace and the place where Gianni Versace was shot and killed. The house plays a huge role in the narrative of the matter, leaving tourists to stop by everyday to pose for pictures.