

Assignment 7: Precedent Analysis

Blogpost due Nov. 20, 9am

T. S. Eliot has observed that 'comparison and analysis are the chief tools of the critic' pointing out that for the author, the creative act is composed of critical labour, 'the labour of sifting, combining, constructing, expressing, correcting, testing: this frightful toil is as much critical as creative.' He goes on to point out 'that some creative writers are superior to others because their critical faculty is superior.'

-- Geoffrey H. Baker, *Design Strategies in Architecture*

I. REFLECTION

First, reflect on the feedback received from the Nov. 13 presentation and record ways to revise and develop your thesis project statement, site interpretations and program documentation.

Consider how you could tell the story better. How could your graphics reveal the hidden potential of your site and program? Look at how MVRDV's MetaCity/Datatown uses images to make a compelling visual argument for the dire situation of the world's resource usage and prepare the audience for accepting radical possible futures. Think about the ways that you can use comparison and analysis of information about your theme, site and program to develop a deeper understanding. Use these ideas to hone your booklet for the draft hand-in.

II. PRECEDENT CASE STUDIES

For three exemplar architectural precedents, dissect how the building's site and internal organization. Examine how systems such as spatial order, structural hierarchy, pedestrian circulation, water flow, indoor-outdoor connections, etc. support the inhabitants' mission, social program and ecological agenda.

Can you find the view which reveals the most about each characteristic? Which ideas are enhanced by the abstraction of flat 2D graphics and which are best shown with 3D forms? Create at least four diagrams which carefully use linewidth, color, and value to emphasize the key aspects of the design. Present your diagrams with a few key photos, color-coded plans and a few paragraphs that describe what you learned from studying the example that is relevant to your project.

Be sure to note all sources, giving photo credits in situ.

READINGS:

-- MVRDV MetaCity/Datatown, Rotterdam: MVRDV/010 Publishers, 1999.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=I-DlCsZctYgC> HT166 .M47 1999

-- Laseau, Paul. Graphic Thinking for Architects and Designers. Chapter 6, Analysis, pp. 81-96 <http://books.google.com/books?id=KRCyqDjYSIAC>