

TASK 4 // PROVOCATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Architectural Vision

Architecture has an intrinsic transformative nature, even though it is something static in our everyday imagery. I believe these provocative avant garde projects are extremely interesting because they give us a different vision of our everyday life and perception of space.

Let's take Arakawa and Madeline Gins' "Bioscleave House": when one thinks about a house, one thinks of its basic common characteristics: straight walls, regular corridors, defined floors etc. With their project, one's view of a house is completely changed.

I think this is something that all the projects in the presentation have in common: they share a transformative nature, just like every architecture project. However, their result is something so different to what we are used to that it becomes provocative. I think about Plato's cavern myth, or in our modern collective knowledge the now cliché image of the film "The Truman Show". The protagonist discovers a staircase in the sky, and the sky itself is actually a panel. He lived his life without noticing it, but as soon as he saw it, his life gained a whole different perspective. I think this is the same effect that these projects give to the viewer.

In that sense, I believe that the 1960/70 avant guard movements such as Haus Rucker, Ant Farm and Archigram really capture architecture's transformative nature.

When one thinks of Archigram's Walking City, one thinks of it as a utopy but it's still architecture. I like to see how they convert an intellectual thought into such innovative and strong images, which are still modern today. The modern image I think about is "Howl's moving castle", by Hayao Miyazaki, a self sufficient walking castle.

I also enjoy seeing how there are projects such as Haus Rucker's provisional architecture, which, with very simple structures, gives a new insight to the relationship between man and space. In "Rahmenbau", the visitor walks on a ramp inside of a frame structure, and from there can see the city inside of another frame structure. The visitor is seeing the same city, but in a different perspective, generating new thoughts. I think this is extremely simple and in a way, revolutionary.

5 Questions to the Document

1. Why is the sight of something different from our everyday imagery so disturbing?
(referring mainly to Dionisio Gonzales' "Postutopias")
2. Why does it feel so interesting to live/see our space in an unusual way?
3. Is it relevant to live/see our space in an unusual way?
4. Is destruction a synonym for innovation? Is it really so interesting?
(referring mainly to Gordon Matta-Clark's works / Julian Rosenfeld and Piero Steinle's "Detonation Deutschland 1996")
5. Does technology stimulate new imageries and utopias? Without it, would it still be possible to have an effective provocative idea today, or would it feel outdated?