

The MONSTER series is a three part response to a series of research readings and precedent projects into architectural monuments, media culture, form and contemporary building culture. The three projects were iterative in nature, drawing on research and thoughts of the previous. They can be seen in three stages:

1] Defining Present Icons of the Global:

A establishment on current icons in architecture and how they can be categorized into 5 different and semiotic categories: scale, purity, ornament, context, and personal will. Each category contains a further elaboration on the topic and a collage of the stage in which these case study icons were put on display. This exercise was done in Marie Paule's urbanism elective.

2] MONSTER: The Collector

The manifestation of research and ideas into a design response project framed around the Expanded Environment MONSTER awards competition. The MONSTER awards competition states that architecture is an agglomeration of diverse influences and typological fragments, as are monsters; hybrids and experiments of nature. The proposal, the collector: is in short an filter system to distill the image of icons into its purest formal form while pinning them on a level playing field for public critic.

3] A letter + A graphic

The letter and graphic is a critic on the image based production of architecture, a theme also stressed in the Collector proposal. It comments on the contemporary experience and curatory nature of the Internet. This is a submission for the Dear Architecture 2015 competition.

Precedents " which have established their identity and assured their continued cultural resonance," is an important part of my design development. Although I emphasis on an investment of the project to theory and conceptual advancement, ultimately I believe architectural thought must disseminate and manifest itself in architecture. The medium of architecture is the physical building itself. A physical form of architecture is the greatest test of idea, through the test of cultures, societies, and time. If a work of architecture is truly great, it will be reveled and preserved, if it does not gain the allegiance of people, it will cease to exist. Architecture is a service for the people, it must first provide this primary function while introducing an agency for political, social, and cultural thought and practice. To study precedents is to obtain the direct translation of an architect's vision and theory into architectural effects. Precedents are beautifully unique case studies of real life or attempted examples in which to ground your own personal work on a base and develop.

The project framed around the quote of John E. Hancock questions in the contemporary role of typologies. Typologies have taken a formal backseat today where diversity of architectural practice constantly alchemize program, form, and spatial conditions to generate unique solutions to either satisfy a personal willfulness or to gain an identity of uniqueness. Typologies are reduced to their absolute essentials in necessary spatial dimensions and infrastructural requirements. They are lost in an age of network cities where the accommodation of diverse circulation actors and flexibility are key factors. Buildings are becoming increasingly complex and dynamic, no longer harbouring a single intention. They fulfill a variety of living requirements, generated by a manifesto on program hybridity outlined by Rem Koolhaas both mentioned in Delirious New York constantly reinforced in OMA's work. In Delirious New York Rem describes the spectacle potential of American skyscrapers to house diverse activities on each floor, each floor has absolute freedom to be program, subjugated only by building dimensions, structure, and the elevator. The elevator becomes an transporting systems to layers of new worlds and social potentials.¹ In OMA's work, program hybridity seeks to liberate the commons by providing a continuous engagement with the exterior, while generating unique program conditions for the city. Program becomes building blocks for an conversation about reinventing social conditions, interactions, and experience. The Collector comments on the fact that buildings no longer need to reflect the formal typologies of their program but rather exemplify other forces of negotiation whether that is the personal willfulness of the architect, or the ambitions of the client. These exterior skins serve as global attractor that perhaps intends to gain popularity online to reinforce an physical site's identity. So in setting this premise, the project theorizes that if projects are purely about the display of exterior form, rather than generating duplicates of similar forms, these projects can be pitted against each other on a level plane for the decision of the global public. Only then can an acceleration of form be production and truly satisfy the architects and clients as truly innovative projects, while being highly specialized and refined in a particular setting.

¹ Koolhaas, Rem. Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan. New York, NY: Monacelli Press, 1978. 320.

The Collector however has no built precedents to draw from, but was conceived through the aspirations of my personal thoughts and a series of readings, paper architecture, and even a contemporary movie. The overall organization of The Collector was inspired by double exposure pictures. The Collector's collection is to materialize as it gains in popularity against other monsters of iconic architecture. This layering from the digital to the essence of a physical form to rest on the bottom of The Collector. The project seeks to categorize the essential nature of architectural production as simplified images of form, rendered without a clear context and conceived intentionally for the global audience of the internet and not for the actual users of the building or the surrounding individuals who would daily feel its spatial presence. The sculpture works by Constantin Brancusi were an preliminary inspiration in situating the role of the image in architecture. The sculptures for Constantin are explorations into trying to physically manifest the characteristics of objects in motion.² The work of Bird In Space for example strips all the physical aspects of the bird, the wings, the feathers, the talons, and purely focuses on portraying the bird in flight. These sculptural works reinforce a personal abstraction of the symbolic image of objects and question its authenticity and value. This ties back to the The Collector, where The Collector acts an science experiment to single out and compare the formal essence of architectural production. In the proposal, as these renderings descend deeper into The Collector, the sculptures become more materialized and pure. Situated in a context that is not of place but of other forms of production, which physically replicates an experience of looking at architecture online.



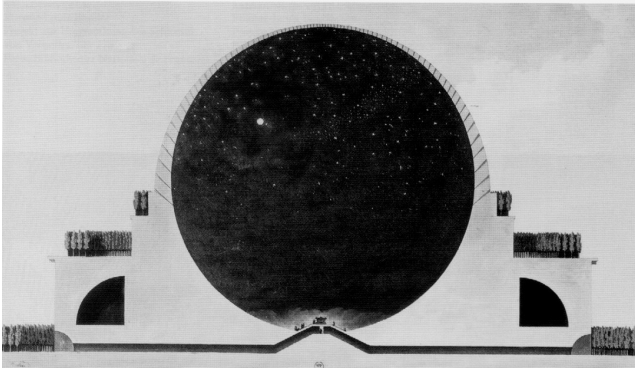
bird in space, Brancusi



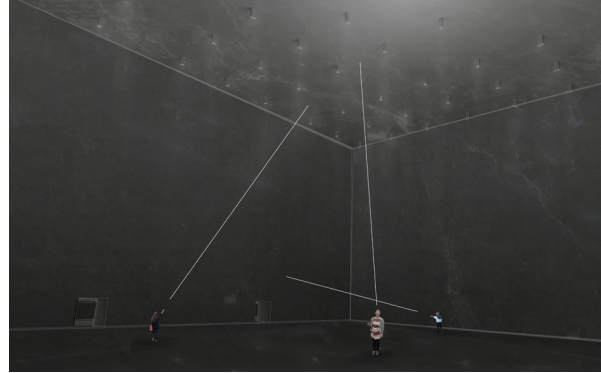
materialization of the essence of architectural forms

² Barthel, Albecht. The Paris Studio of Constantin Brancusi. Future Anterior, 2006.

The section drawing for Newton's Cenotaph was an inspiration for the big box space at the end of The Collector. The big box space was placed deliberately as an mystifying element in opposition to the the series of forms the visitors would experience. It attempts to once again reassert a spatial necessity in architecture in contrast to the pure consumption of architectural image as the dominant form of experience. Upon passage, the box is situated to overwhelm the visitor with its shear size just like the the Cenotaph where the visitor would be engulfed in shear space mimicking the infinite extensions of outer space.



cenotaph section drawing

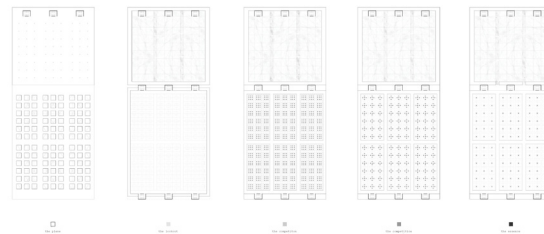


big box space

The final influential precedent worth addressing is Rem Koolhaas's image: City of the Global Captive. The image is a supplementary image to Rem's notion of the grid system in New York.³ Each block in turn follows rigorous building setback restrictions but in relationship to each other become islands of diverse conditions. Each block island can house entirely new programs and social behaviour, making New York a truly flourishingly rich and diverse global city. The grid system was adopted in The Collector project to house the architectural forms. It was appropriate to consider each module as the abstract context of the form, relocated and situated on a common plane for comparison. The grid system in turn also allows for a rigorous but diverse set of circulation paths.



city of a global captive, Rem



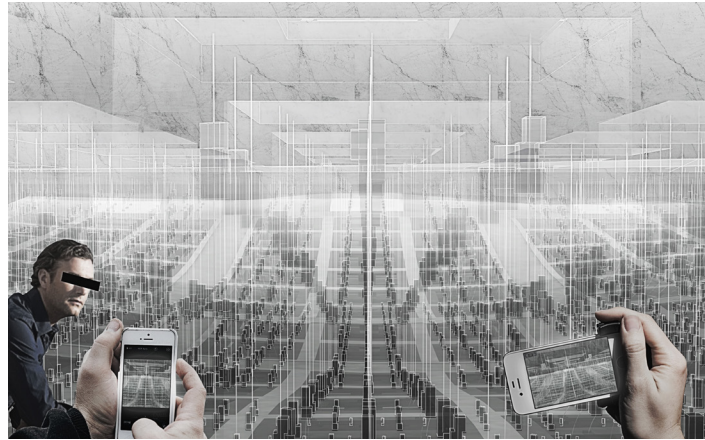
gridded organization

³ Koolhaas, Rem. Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan. New York, NY: Monacelli Press, 1978. 320.

The Collector character in the Marvel Universe was the primary inspiration for the idea of the archive for the project. the Collector in Marvel is neither a hero or villan, but a character who seeks to archive rare species and items across the galaxy. The first visualization of The Collector was introduced in The Guardians of the Galaxy where species and items were contained in floating container. The Collector inspired the project in creating this single place to situate and collect all old and new forms of architecture for examination. An archive is a program that is timeless, allowing snippets of different ages and reiterates the continuous nature of history.



the collector's archive, Guardians of the Galaxy concept art



view of sculptures coming down

The three part explorations of The Collector was driven by my interest in the operation of image and icon in architecture and how architecture in turn has shifted to emphasis to a global audience with the advent of the internet. With virtual access, the way we see and experience architecture is fundamentally changing and architecture has responded in parallel with this digital revolution. Precedents of paper architecture, artists and popular media shaped the rigour and spatial nature of The Collector project. Precedents draw inspiration and prompt imagination for this conceptual project. It stimulated characteristics of order and feelings of space along with its embedded interpretation and meaning.

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- Comaroff, Joshua, and Ker Ong. *Horror in Architecture*. Novato, California: ORO Editions, 2013.

PRECEDENTS

- Rem Koolhaas: *City of the Captive Globe*
- Marvel Universe: *The Collector*
- Cenotaph for Newton