Parruchiere, wigs, and other architectural heresies

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Parruchiere, wigs, and other architectural heresies

By

Mary Rebecca Ferrara

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Major: Architecture
Major Professor: Dr. Jennifer Bloomer

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This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

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has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

INTRODUCTION 1

SITING SECTIONS 3
The Icon and its Alter Ego: the Apparatus 4
Methods of Constructing a Process and its Site 5
How Can I Deal with Rome? 9

DIAGRAMMING DILEMMAS 20
Lexicon of Important Thoughts 21
Under the Section Durer 24
Under the Section Forma Urbis 30
Under the Section Duchamp 41

FRAMING BEAUTY 51
"Narrative Strands" 52
Vittone's Domes 54
And the Retable 58

APPENDIX 66

REFERENCES 73
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INTRODUCTION

The work in question revolves and intertwines around a series of three obsessions. The first obsession was planted during my time as a teaching assistant in the Iowa State Department of Architecture’s study abroad program in Rome, Italy, but blossomed four months later when I returned to Rome to take part in a research “scavenger hunt” of the Baroque period. Armed with sketchbooks, cameras, pens, pencils, and a digital video camera, four colleagues and I mapped and traveled an itinerary through Rome’s traditional Baroque spaces as well as those that could be classified as a contemporary condition of the Baroque. At this point in time, I had decided on a tentative notion of my thesis program, a beauty salon, but had not settled on a location to site the proposition. Thus, the collection of images and visual research which occurred during the research trip revolved around a slippery idea of program, in other words, it served only as a guide or suggestion (possibly a filter) of what types of baroque imagery to look for. What amassed from my travels was a collection of sketches and photographs of baroque details that were then articulately hung on the wall in front of my studio desk. In the breaks and interim spaces of work, my eyes fixated on these images entering them into my subconscious and resulting in a deep fascination of the illuminated domes, passageways, side chapels, and framing conventions specific to the Baroque sensibility. In an effort to understand and unpack this fascination, I set upon a corresponding “scavenger hunt.” Searching through books on the Baroque, contemporary art criticism, and perspective, my goal was to add images visually relating in shape, color, texture, lighting condition, and subject matter to the previous assemblage of images. It was from this collection that my two other obsessions manifested.

Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude completed by Albrecht Dürer in 1525, is a predecessor to the traditionally bracketed period of the Baroque. Its contemporary manifestation, as established in this thesis, the perspective machine Etant Donnes: 1. La Chute D'Eau 2. Le gaz D'Eclairage designed by Marcel Duchamp during the period 1946-1966 also finds itself outside the conventional boundaries of the Baroque. Despite this exteriority, these two images continually resurfaced during the research, creeping in at unexpected moments, formulating new relationships, and evoking new methods of thinking about the Baroque. Once I was conscious of my obsessions, I realized the potentiality these images and their interplay have in the generation of a structure.

What follows is an explanation of this structure, its epistemological milieu, and its manifestation on a site. The description of the thesis is divided into four sections. The first, Siting Sections, explains and places into context the theoretical armature of the project. The Second, Diagramming
Dilemmas consist of four subsections and enacts the diagram established in both Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude and tint Donnes. The first of these subsections, Lexicon of Important Thoughts, explains how to read the enacted diagram and is followed by its three participants: Under the Section Dürer, Under the Section Forma Urbis, and Under the Section Duchamp. The third section of the thesis, Framing Beauty, describes parallel episodes in the research, which although active in the diagram, require a further unpacking on their own. And finally, the last section, Appendix, is a compilation of the images assemble and produced during the 12 months that bracket the period of research called thesis which, surprisingly, in its completion feels more like a beginning than an end.
figure 1.1
Borromini's dome at the church of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza
The Icon and its alter ego: the apparatus

Parruchieri, Wigs, and other Architectural Heresies is a project that demonstrates a process of dealing with the past, today. This process does not look as historical artifacts as objects impervious to critical interpretations but moreover utilizes the artifact, the image, or the precedent as “active” agents within the generation of a structure. Mieke Bal describes this process as one not rooted in chronology or conducive of a single, fixed perspective of history.

By adopting forms from the work of an earlier artist, the later artist proves to be under the spell of his predecessor’s influence: he implicitly or explicitly declares his allegiance and debt to him. Micheal Baxandall convincingly proposed reversing the passivity implied in that perspective, considering the work of the later artist as an active intervention in the material handed down to him or her (1985, 58-62). This reversal, which also affects the relation between cause and effect, complicates the idea of precedent as origin, and thereby makes the claim of historical reconstruction problematic.

Concurrent with this view of history is an operative approach to visual analogy or in other words a way of dealing with the image. (which implies that the image is an artifact) This project is grounded in my belief that an image has a power to speak. It carries with it the potentiality for many diverse readings and interpretations. By this I mean, the analysis of an image does not create a one to one relationship between that which is being represented and its meaning. In this sense, the viewed subject is intended to engage in a dialogue of ideas. With respect to this dialogue, it is important to clarify the difference between utilizing the image as an icon and deploying the image within an apparatus. The study of an icon would imply examining the “reuse of earlier forms, patterns and figures”, and its reuse suggests that within these forms, patterns and figures, there is a “ready made quality of signs” (or discursive meanings) available to the later artist for citation. Without the process of recontextualization, the icon remains as a stable and contained image, or in other words, the forms, patterns, and figures remain intact. Once the image (icon) is set into motion within an

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1 Parruchiere is Italian for hairdresser. It can also be used to imply the space of the hairdresser, the beauty salon. Also, I would also like to include, under the umbrella of beauty salon, the word cosmos because of its derivation from the Greek word “kosmos” meaning arrangement or adornment. “Kosmos can also be read as adornment, especially feminine, for indeed ‘cosmetic’ comes from kosmos. Chros (skin or color) is the Homeric word for living body, which was understood as a surface and the bearer of visibility, visibility being the guarantor of existence or being. For the Greeks appearing was surface, with epiphaneia a word used for both. For them, when a woman kosmese (adorned) herself, she wrapped her chros in a second skin or body in order to bring the living surface-body so clothed to light; to make it appear. If women, in ancient Greece, were essentially invisible, cosmetic kosmos made them visible. This quote is taken from Indra Kagis McEwen, Socrates Ancestor, pages 43-44.

2 The use of the word structure is utilized to mean both an architectural proposition and a method of organizing (arranging) an argument.

armature of relationships, the icon and its discursive meanings start to transform the original meaning of the image. As a result of this transformation, one then becomes aware of the icon’s use as a generator of ideas— other words an apparatus. If we return to the idea of viewing the historical precedent (or ready made sign) through the lens of contemporary culture, it is possible to see how the status of the “ready made signs” are recontextualized within current cultural debates. As a result, images (historical as well as contemporary) become active agents of meanings which fluctuate and change depending on the lens with which they are viewed through. Considering this mutability, the intentionality of the image needs to be articulated and employed in the process of utilizing the image. Only then can we see how to mine the potentiality of this recontextualization within our envisioning of contemporary culture and the historical past.

Why is it important to develop an approach to visual analogy, and more importantly, where can we locate the process within the development of architecture? (the section)

Methods of Contextualizing a Process and its Site

In a course of research project, when the extent of the boundaries could be infinitely extendable, there comes a point of saturation where it becomes necessary to begin the editing process. For me, this space of critical mass occurred when I realized that without a site to locate the visual relationships compiled during my image collecting, the process of assembling would continue resulting in a body of research but not an architectonic construction. So, I began thinking about the thesis with respect to how I could synthesized the research into a proposition or intervention which allowed each separate image to be choreographed or mapped upon a single location. By this I mean, the location will allow a certain fixed space or “provisional center” for the discursive arguments of the images to take place. Once the location was earmarked and the program folded in, the editing (filtering or screening) process began.

A friend, who knew my fears regarding the swelling, homeless mass of images, suggested utilizing the site given to the students in Rome during period I was a Teaching Assistant there. The

transformation alludes to two forms of cutting active in this project. The first is the inscription process of the architectural representation method of the section. What I mean by “section” is the intersection of the three dimensional object with a two dimensional surface. This surface is then inscribed with the residual of the object being cut. The beauty salon allocates a space for the cutting of hair. “People cut their hair at significant thresholds in their lives, before or during travel, to mark a special birthday, to purge oneself after a bad affair. For both men and women cutting hair is a chance to transform oneself.” Wilson, Anne, Told and Retold an Inquiry about Hair: (Toronto: The Museum of Textiles, 1999) 13. In this sense transformation leads to a form of cutting which implies a loss.
economy of this move, already having a base of knowledge regarding the history, photographic
documentation, and a series of measured and rendered drawings of the site, was what initially
attracted me to the idea; but, as I considered the iconic nature of the city and the specifics of the site,
the appropriateness with respect to my generative set of images (specifically my three obsessions)
made the location of Rome an effective choice. The Forum of Peace was one of a series of elaborate
public spaces built adjacent to the original Form Romanum, the low lying area that occupies the space
between the Capitoine, Palatine, Quirinal, and Oppiom Hills. The site was originally a library of the
Forum of Peace and the location of the Forma Urbis, "one of the most remarkable artifacts of Roman
antiquity: an enormous and extremely detailed map that recorded the entire city." The map was
inscribed in white marble, and occupied an entire wall of the library. In the sixth century AD, this
wall and a portion of the former library were converted into the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian. In
today's standards, the map would measure sixty-five feet wide by forty feet tall and exist as an
exterior wall facing the Via Dei Fori Imperiali, the grand boulevard carved by Mussolini visually
connecting his balcony with the coliseum—more importantly visually mapping Mussolini onto the
grand monuments of Rome's antiquity. Fragments of this map have been unearthed and are housed
in the Antiquitarium Comunale, which unfortunately is not open to the public, but a recreation can be
viewed in the Museo Capitolino. In addition to the recreation, the panels of the map can be visually
retraced on its original location by following the holes left from the bronze clamps that attached the 4
inch thick marble panels to the structural brick. These holes, which mark the loss of its "decorative"
skin, and the pattern created by them, should be thought of as a screen or filter with which to view the
façade of the church. Between this façade and the Via Dei Fori Imperiali now exist another form of
retracing, that of an archeological pit. Currently under excavation, this area is being studied in hopes
of discovering more fragments of the Forma Urbis, but more importantly, the pit demarcates an
interior space to operate upon and delineates a potential (and needed) passageway between the Via
Dei Fori Imperiali and the Roman Forum. With its exposed layers of strata, the archeological pit also
marks a point of theoretical connection...

---

5 "Flanking the Temple of Peace were two libraries, one Greek, one Latin. Both halls were newly built at the
time of the incising of the Marble Plan, in the first decade of the third century (203–211 AD). Though the Forum
Pacis itself was first dedicated by the emperor Vespasian in 75 AD. Pope Felix founded the church of St.
Cosmas and Damian in 527 AD, building within the shell of a hall adjacent to that of the Forma Urbis. The
wall which supported the Marble plan still stands, now the rear wall of the church. In the 1930s Mussolini's
program to 'glorify' the ruins of antiquity involved the demolition of centuries of subsequent building
throughout Rome, including the area now occupied by the Via Dei Fori Imperiale." Excerpted from the
Program Statement "Bound" prepared for architecture students in Rome and issued in the spring semester 1999.
It was developed and written by professors Jeffrey Balmer, Mathew Fisher, Paulette Singley, and Kathleen
Viewing Rome as a compressed notion of time is a theme that resides in its subconscious of this project. Freud, in his essay “Civilization and Its Discontents,” uses the city of Rome as an analogy to the workings of the mind, or more specifically, how “in mental life nothing which has once been formed can perish.” In order to illustrate the problem of preservation within the realm of the mind, he describes a physical entity where antiquities of a city, in his example Rome, coexist with the current structures of the same space.

In the place occupied by the Palazzo Caffarelli would once more stand—without the Palazzo having to be removed—the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus: and not only in its latest shape, as the Romans of the Empire saw it, but also in its earliest one, when it still showed Etruscan forms and was ornamented with terra-cotta antefixes. Where the Coliseum now stands we could at the same time admire Nero’s banished golden House. On the Piazza of the Pantheon we should find not only the Pantheon of to-day, as it was bequeathed to us by Hadrian, but, on the same site, the original edifice erected by Agrippa; indeed, the same piece of ground would be supporting the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva and the ancient temple over which it was built. And the observer would perhaps only have to change the direction of his glance or his position in order to call up the one view or the other.6

How seductive this view could be in reality. I wonder what Freud would say about the McDonald’s which now serves as the Pantheon’s mirror image? Freud’s essay is the catalyst for my own interpretation of Rome, where analogous images and sites are superimposed and mapped for further readings and layering of compression. This compression, which I also consider an intensified section, takes historic pieces of time and collapses them on a single surface in order to see what happens or what results from such a collision. Yet, Freud argues that this space is incapable of being represented.

If we want to represent historical sequence in spatial terms we can only do it by juxtaposition in space: the same space cannot have two different contents. Our attempt seems to be an idle game. It has only one justification. It shows us how far we are from mastering the characteristics of mental life by representing them in pictorial terms.7

Or is it?

He could not have imagined the possibilities the cinematic and digital world would have on this problematic of representation. Freud’s three-dimensional palimpsest is analogous too the landscape

Wouters. Also, It is important to note that housed within this library were city plans (maps), and cadastral registers.

7 Freud 15.
of Julie Taymore’s Titus where Caesar, 80s punk, and E.U.R. meet each other with a familiarity suggestive of a normal daily occurrence. Or, in other words, historical episodes are represented as parallel circumstances—not as an event or a space in a time. In this sense, the episodes are sliced through to ignite interaction amongst space and time with the intent to resist a linear sequencing of history (as well as a resistance to a linear methodology).

Within the realm of architectural presentation, the Section has the power to manifest similar notions of compression. Sections are the “residual of cutting an object with a slicing plane—the intersection of a three dimensional and two dimensional object.” (Bloomer, ??). Traditionally, within architectural practices, the section drawing illustrates how the building is constructed, what materials are used, how the materials are connected together, and finally, how the building is intended spatially. Expanding on the traditional notion of section, Justine Clarke argues that the process of sectioning is in itself generative of an architectural construction.

To draw is to cut, to extract, to withdraw, to disembowel. To draw is also to bring together that which is separated. The architect draws on this ambiguity, cutting (renting) and assembling (mending); slicing open the imagined building to make plans, elevations and sections; (re)constructing the building, drawing the slices together. The eye moves constantly between assorted drawing, stitching them together. Architecture is made through and whilst drawing. It is explored and verified in cuts, these drawings are, in turn, a slicing of thoughts. Cutting is a way of thinking and making.

“[architecture] is explored and verified in cuts, these drawings are, in turn, a slicing of thoughts.”

Taking this method as a point of departure, it is possible to see how the section could in fact be viewed as a pictorial representation of mental life. (It is in this sense that I oppose Freud’s statement in his previous quotation.) Implied in this method of sectioning is a notion of movement not only in the way the eye reassembles the building, but also within the idea that what is being depicted is a

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8 Titus is a 1999 film adaptation of Shakespeare’s Titus Adronicus. Julie Taymore, the filmmaker, utilizes the “site” of the film in a similar manner to that of Freud’s description. “Modern Rome built on the ruins of ancient Rome, offered the perfect stratification for the setting of the film. I wanted to blend and collide time, to create a singular period that juxtaposed elements of ancient barbaric ritual with familiar, contemporary attitude and style. Instead of recreating Rome, 400 AD, the locations of the film would include the ruins of Hadrian’s villa, the baths of Caracalla, the Coliseum etc., as they are today, with all their corroded beauty, centuries of graffiti and ghastly, ghastly history.” (http://www.foxsearchlight.com/titus/load.html) E.U.R. stands for Esposizione Universale di Roma. Located just south of the city center, the suburb was originally designed by Marcello Piacentini in 1918 for the 1942 World Expo in order to symbolize the achievements of Fascism. Post war, the project was cancelled and subsequently transformed into governmental offices.


slice or portion of a thought. In other words, the section should be viewed as a *frozen moment* (similar to a film still) depicting the state of the thoughts taking place at the moment of cutting. Furthermore what I am also suggesting here is the veiled presence of the author (architect) for: the section negotiates the architect’s control over materiality, and her enchantment with materials, textures and their entanglement with space. In addition to the slicing of thoughts, the section is a slice through “materials.” The materials, juxtaposed analogous images (icons), are cut with the intention to open up and enact issues embedded within the images. As a result, the slicing plane then becomes a thin membrane inscribed with the registration of the dialogues and links enacted amongst the images (or in this sense, the apparatus). Similar to the palimpsest, repetitive processes of sectioning produces a series of membranes (drawings) which are not anticipatory of the next space but suggestive of former inhabitants and their recontextualization within a parallel space.

*How Can I Deal with Rome?*

Inside the armature of a palimpsest, let us return to Rome and consider how one can view the city’s images and its artifacts within the realm of the project. Rome is fabulous as an example of reuse and readaptation. There is no where to look that does not have some aspect of a ruin dovetailed into newer state. In this sense, the thesis is motivated by this condition but not in a nostalgic manner. As the city center continues to get fenced off to the everyday life, each ruin, fragment, and artifact becomes increasingly pristine. These taboo spaces are analogous to the forbidden objects in a museum to be seen and not touched, while the distance serves to narrow my perspective with which to view the fragments and spaces. This concept of demarcating preserved sites is a modern conception. Considering the intersection of contemporary culture within historical space, I am struck by the paradox of preservation. In one instance it is a cure and another a poison. As museum of the...

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11 The “slicing plane” could also be thought of as a tissue or hymen. “A tissue is a textured weaving. The metaphors—historical tissue, literary tissue, sociological tissue, and urban tissue—are commonly used in thinking about the institutions or objects named in them. In histological analysis, tissues are subjected to very thin slicing (they are sectioned [POCHE]), and in the residual section we can see traces of the intermecine structures of interlacing threads that go off in different directions and tie themselves back together with other threads.” Bloomer, Jennifer, *Architecture and the Text: the (S)cripts of Joyce and Piranesi* page 183.

12 In this sense, I use the term nostalgia to mean a sentimental desire to return to the happiness of a former place or time. But there does exist an underlaymen of another form of nostalgia. It is interesting to note that Freud’s description of Uncanny is rooted in a moment when the cavity of the female genitalia is manifested to the young boy. That which seems familiar is made unfamiliar the moment when the son realizes the mother’s organs differ from his own. Here is a connection to the word hole and loss. Notwithstanding, desire does inhabit this project in the generative method of mapping.

historical center grows, the contemporary Roman citizen has to deal with the loss of its' space. On any given day the Roman Forum becomes a potent display of nationalities whose common objective is the observation and recreation of history. In this sense, the Forum functions as a viewing device with which to manifest individual narratives of histories. Implied in this collection of narratives are very diverse readings of Roman history. Readings which may or may not belong to those of the native Roman, and readings which further distance the historical center from the contemporary society of Rome. It is interesting to note that the demarcation of historic sites by fencing reflects the distance with which a linear perspective of historical reconstruction relies upon. By framing the forum as a receptor of multiple narratives of history, the site resists a single fixed reconstruction. By this I mean, by the site becomes generative not restrictive. It is this notion of a viewing device of multiple narratives which connects me to the idea that the perspective grid (the apparatus which is used as a measuring device in the construction of a perspective drawing) could offer a way to think through and operate upon the site. The term “operate” seems appropriate in its surgical connotations of cutting, incising, or slicing into the urban fabric of Rome. This is not to say the project servers as a scar, but moreover an implementation of a contemporary condition within the ever-expanding museum of the Roman Forum. In its excessiveness, the Forum is baroque and sublime. The torn, ripped, and weathered shreds of remaining structures allude to the layers of former grandeur. Baroque by the oddity of its beauty and sublime at the moment of realization of what was.
Sketches completed during my “scavenger hunt for the baroque”
n had the advantage of being quiet and giving little warn
t the bomb. Both were light enough to be carried around by t
being borne like a stretcher by means of metal bars which exten

figure 1.3
Generative collage of Piranesi's Ampio Magnifico Collegio
figure 1.4
Conceptual collage of Piranesi's Ampio Magnifico Collegio. In this piece, I was thinking about the perspective grid (Alberti's gridded net), the archeologist grid, and the view one sees when she looks up into the dome at Santi' Ivo alla Sapienza (figure 1.1).
Three dimensional construction of Piranesi's Collegio.

This construction places the Collegio as a viewing screen. The images placed behind are gathered from the photographs taken on my "Baroque scavenger hunt." They are cut apart and reassembled into a 3D collage of details about viewing the Baroque dome.

Dimensions are 3'-0" wide by 4'-0" high.
figure 1.6
Side view illustrating the three dimensional quality of the generative Construction of Piranesi’s Collegio
Figure 1.7
Detail of three-dimensional construction of Piranesi's Collegio
figure 1.8

Detail, generative construction of Piranesi's Ampio Magnifico Collegio illustrating the "eye" of the vanishing point. The viewing screen (the panel depicting the Collegio) should be thought of as the sliced plane of the visual cone. In addition to an eye the vanishing point could also be thought of as the oculus of the lantern (again see figure 1.1)
figure 1.9
Detail of window in three-dimensional Collegio construction
Images beyond the viewing screen are taken from interior photograph (by the author) of
Baroque churches in Rome, Italy.
architectural hairdos, eyes, oculuses, monads, holes, lanterns, passageways, prosceniums, illuminated domes, screened domes, mirrored domes, "gridded" domes, fake domes. "furry" domes, vagina domes, basket cases, veiled females, exposed females, perspective constructions, constructed relationships, the visual "think map."

Studio wall with generative images compiled from research on the Baroque period, contemporary art history, and perspective
Suppose we are able to send a satellite on a journey out of the galaxy. We would like to put a message on it to let any intelligent creature who finds it know from where it came. We have no way of knowing how far it will travel before it is picked up, nor will whoever picks it up be able to reliably tell from what direction it came. There is also, of course, the problem that we cannot use language to describe our location. Furthermore, as we can assume no common landmarks or reference points, we cannot draw a map, for the satellite’s discoverer’s will not know how to orient it. Is there a way we can draw a diagram so that, assuming only they have sufficient information about the universe, they will be able to find us?

In Germany during the fifteenth century, book printing and woodcuts allowed for the first time the artist or author the ability to disseminate his ideas throughout the world. Included in amongst this flow of information was the woodcut *Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude*, completed by Albrecht Durer in 1525. Durer whose intentions were honorable, the elevation of the technique of perspective to an important branch of mathematics—projective geometry, illustrates (diagrams) in the above woodcut the procedure and requirements for the construction of a perspective drawing. Depicted clearly is the role of the viewing subject as a frozen (neutral?) recorder of that which is seen in the grid apparatus. Projected onto this grid would be the object of the viewing subject’s gaze, the model, whose bodily contours become abstracted to points on a surface. This surface is considered the sliced plane of the visual cone. The points are then transcribed onto the another grid that of the drawing surface. Thus, we have the basic layout of the diagram. First there must be a registration plane (in this instance, the perspective grid) and second there must be an opportunity for a dialogue to occur between the two sides of the registration plane (here, we have the recumbent nude and the draughtsman.).

But, why a diagram? (*My intuitive nature yawns at the prospect of a thesis entirely based on a diagram.*) Within conventional architectural representation, the diagram manifest itself as a plan, sketch, or drawing, designed to demonstrate how something works or to clarify the relationship between the parts of a whole. Inside the armature of this project, the diagram might seem contradictory because it dispenses with narrative by it reducing the logic of the argument to one of transparency (*the frozen or neutral viewpoint*). It resists in multiple readings. Because this project embraces and relies on multiple narratives, it is important to understand that the diagram must enact discursive arguments. In this sense, diagramming becomes a way to think *through* images. I utilize
the word through because of its connotation of passing or extending from one end side or surface to another. Translating this surface into the registration plane, one can see how the Durer diagram is appropriated into a working methodology of the Section. Jennifer Bloomer, in her essay *Vertex and Vortex: A Tectonic of Section*, utilizes Piranesi’s etching of the Ampio Magnifico Collegio in an analogous manner to the methodology previously described:

Piranesi’s drawing, a collection of black spots—held in front of the eye describes a screen or window for seeing through. The section is an eye through which the eye sees. The transmission of information begins at the point of a V, or at the intersection of V’s, at the back of the eye. The section, the poche is in front of the eye, in the eye, at the back of the eye. Behind the eye, it can remain intact—an object seen; it can become a center—an object analyzed; or it can become disseminated—an object, a thrown-in-the-way, cut apart into bits which drift and explore— inquire, seek, ramify, connecting to other bits, forming a new text in which strands of the old object are imbedded.

I utilize this quote for two reasons. First, for clear depiction of the relationship between the location of the “V”, or viewing point, occurring in the mind and the screen or window (*in this instance, the drawing of the Collegio*) for seeing through. Secondly, it describes two ways of approaching what is seen in this window. The object viewed can “remain intact—an object seen” or “it can become disseminated” following various (curly) strains of thoughts and multiple trajectories of intertwined associations. I have chosen to embrace and explore these “thrown-in-the-way objects” “cut apart” bits and braided strands of thoughts.

What follows is an elaborated mapping (*or think map*) of these thoughts and their registration of an architectonic proposition on a site (the area surrounding Church of St. Cosmas and Damian). This mapping occurs in the form of another appropriation of the Durer diagram. Inhabiting the role of the perspective grill (*which will from now on be referred to as “the stylus”*) is the chapter *Under the section Forma Urbis*. This chapter should be viewed as the registration plane and the hinge (*barrette*) between the participants of the diagram *Under the Section Dürer*, and *Under the Section Duchamp*. These two flanking (*winged or feathered*) sections of the stylus are composed of the materials “cut apart into bits which drift and explore— inquire, seek, ramify, connecting to other bits, forming a new text in which strands of the old object are imbedded.” These bits and strands of thoughts take the form of excerpts (*incisions and sections*) cut from texts that are then recomposed and collaged together resulting in a lacey network of associations. Each knot or subsection of this lacework should be viewed as a dense collection of (*collagen*) matter implanted into a fleshy body of work concerned with looking at the multiple folds of architecture.

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I have described this registration plane as a slice or portion of a thought. In other words, the section should be viewed as a frozen moment (similar to a film still) depicting the state of the thoughts taking place at the moment of cutting. Furthermore what I am also suggesting here is the veiled presence of the author (architect) for; the section negotiates the architect’s control over materiality, and her enchantment with materials, textures and their entanglement with space. In addition to the slicing of thoughts, the section is a slice through “materials.” The materials, juxtaposed analogous images (icons), are cut, with the intention to open up and enact issues embedded within the images. As a result, the slicing plane then becomes a thin membrane inscribed with the registration of the dialogues and links enacted amongst the images (or in this sense, the apparatus).
And what of the Durer diagram? In effort to unpack the discursive arguments of this woodcut, let us take a closer look at the textual materials happening within the inscribed surface. "But this image is more than a simple instruction."

It played an important role in the codification of perspective and has been assigned a founding role in perspective’s history. The image is not a version of a myth, but it has attained mythic status. It acts as another screen for a range of other stories...It is used in a wide range of discourses to articulate a variety of interrelated issues: the artificiality of perspective; the fixed and predetermined position of the spectator; the relationship between artist and model between the subject and object of art; and perhaps most recently, to exemplify the genderedness of this relationship. (emphasis mine)

3 Carke, Justine, 19.
4 Ibid., 19-20.
Bearing in mind the previous discussion concerning a narrative approach towards history and visual analogy as well as the operative methodology of the section, it should be apparent that this thesis is interested in questioning and re-envisioning this "fixed" and "predetermined" position of the spectator. This fixed position of the spectator would assume that the object on view, in this case the wood cut, remains as a stable object, or in other words it does not allow the viewer's (in this sense, I am referring to myself) own cultural bias and condition to affect the way one perceives the object. Mieke Bal describes this condition of neutrality as the "inevitable screen that later art puts between the historians gaze and older works." If we were to lift off this screen, as I will argue later that Durer is inviting us to do, what would we see?

![Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude](image)

**figure 2.6**

*Drawing of a Recumbent Nude*

When viewing this image, is it possible to ignore the depiction of the voluptuous female nude? Durer, in other woodcuts included amongst his treaties on measurement (*composed of demonstrations and writings concerned with the codification of perspective*), illustrates, as the object of the viewing subject’s (the draughtsman) gaze, a fully clothed and seated man; an urn; and a lute. For me, the stark contrast between these objects and the recumbent nude questions the neutrality with which I am supposed to view this image and permits the implications regarding gender to surface.

Technical Knowledge does not equal neutrality: the description of a technical procedure does not require a voluptuous nude (although there might be other things at play that do). Descriptions are not transparent, they are not outside the cultures that produce them—nor the cultures that produce readings of them.6

*Transparency leads to a discussion of the window:*

Rosalind Krauss writes eloquently in her essay "Grids" that if a window is transparent it also reflects.7 The Durer woodcut can be thought of in a similar manner because of the way the image is

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6 Bal, Mieke, 7.
7 Clarke, Justine, 21.8
demonstrating the method to construct an object in perspective while simultaneously being represented perceptively. It is in this sense that the image can be described as mapping two perspectives at once. The first mapped perspective is the obvious relationship that is set up between the draughtsman and the reclining female figure whose position appears uncomfortably torqued to the other gazing spectator of the image, myself. Upon this realization that the female figure is facing both the draughtsman and the viewer of the woodcut, it becomes apparent that you (the viewer of the woodcut) have become a stand-in for the draughtsman—the observer and (neutral?) recorder of the scene depicted. Thus we can see how the two mapped perspectives are working and how they relate to each other. It is precisely because of the construction of this relationship that I believe Durer is inviting the viewer to become an active participant in the image—or in other words allowing in the potential for speculative readings.

In making her available to both viewer and artist, Durer is forced to distort the laws of perspective and submit the model to considerable disfigurement. A simple instruction about the practice of drawing thus becomes a complex lesson about cultural and sexual hegemony.\(^8\)

Could Durer also be asking the viewer to become a participant in the cultural construction and representation of the female as the object of the male gaze?

Focusing our gaze beyond the foreground of the draughtsman’s table and onto the penetrations in the wall that mark the horizon line or vanishing point of the image, one notices the lack of any window framing system with which to hold glass into place. These openings are penetrations to the exterior of the “scene” where space is connected to the infinite.\(^9\) This lack of framing system is

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\(^9\) While reading the *Architectural Uncanny*, I came upon an interesting description of a theater’s proscenium: In Derrida’s characterization of Freud’s discourse as a ‘scene of writing’ and the Mystic pad ‘as the psyche, society, the world,’ the question of the screen is transformed into that of the stage, or rather the proscenium, the changing nature of which, not unnaturally, may paralleled to that of the painterly screen itself. If the analogy of the mirror might call up the fullness of classical theatrically, its space dedicated to framing the actions of human subjects, central figures in a representational drama...

Vidler, Anthony, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1992) 128-129. I located this passage in the chapter titled “Shifting Ground” while reading the description of Peter Eisenman’s project “Romeo and Juliet.” What strikes me about this passage is not so much the content but the combination of the words “screen,” “proscenium,” and “framing actions of human subjects.” I am automatically reminded of the influence the theater had on the Baroque artist. For example, the consistent motif of sculptures (often located in a side chapel of a church) which depict the subject in some form of transformation intended for the viewer to witness. The proscenium also reminds me of the images I have on my wall of the passageways that are illuminated from the end. (Bernini’s Scala Regia, Boromini’s false perspective at the Palazzo Spada, Bernini’s Blessed Ludovica Albertoni, and the entranceway to a Sicilian palazzo). I am also drawn to the notion of screen for the connection back to memory, the stylus, the (cont. onto the next page)
underscored by the very articulated window-like apparatus which is “framing” the draftsman’s view. In this framed apparatus I notice Durer has chosen to illustrate this space as opaque rather than what it should be... transparent. Where I should see grain of the wall texture behind I see a white background which clearly emphasizes the horizontal and vertical strings forming the grid or the grided veil. It is important to note that the opacity of the apparatus depicts the registration space of the image. By this I mean the sliced plane of the visual cone where the three dimensional image intersects the two dimensional surface. Also implied by the whiteness of the grid apparatus is the neutrality with which the viewer is to perceive the object being drawn. This neutrality demystifies the object to a series of plotted coordinates in space.

This registration space is the space of critical interpretation.

In the course of the fourteenth century, however, the forms appearing on the surface came to be thought of as something existing behind the surface until Leone Battista Alberti could like the picture to a ‘transparent window through which we look out into a section of the visible world.... but no one thought of applying the Euclidean theory of vision to the problems of graphic representation. This was precisely what Brunelleschi proposed to do. He conceived the truly revolutionary idea of intersection the Euclidean pyramid by a plane inserted between the object and the eye, and thereby ‘projecting’ the visual image on this surface just as a lens projects a picture on the screen or on a photographic film or plate.

The lens is an important analogy because it constructs a cinematic relationship between what is being viewed and the voyeur, or in other words the analogy elicits a spatial relationship which is illustrated most aptly by that of the cinematic apparatus. Within this apparatus, the spectator plays a central role into the signification (the production of meaning) of the film, but only in the sense that the two become interactive. With the aid Annette Kuhn, I will unpack the term cinematic apparatus.

Cinematic address may also, for example, construct looks at the spectator. This is particularly clear in the shot-reverse shot structure: the viewing subject, in standing in for the look of a protagonist in the film, becomes the object of the fictional gaze of the other protagonist. In addition to this relay of looks between spectator and screen/image, the exchange of looks between characters within the space of the film itself may also be taken into account. At moments, of course—and this perhaps constitutes an instance of discours in classic cinema—the fictional look of a character may effectively coincide with the look of the spectator.

(cont.) the inevitable historical screen as described by Mieke Bal, and most importantly the baroque invention by Vittone of the screened or nested domes that allow for the hidden light sources to illuminate the cupola.

10 This “gidded veil” could also be called Durer’s Hairnet. The strings pulled tightly and fasten to the frame are the 16th century equivalent to AutoCAD’s crosshairs. Durer’s crosshairs function both as an apparatus for measuring but also as a veil or impediment (distancing mechanism) to the female figure being viewed.


What is important about this quote is that it illustrates how the characters and episodes within the film are choreographed in order for the spectator (the viewer of the film) to identify with what is being seen. Expanding on this reading, it is also argued that the spectator takes on characteristics of the voyeur by identifying with the camera. "in this case the viewing subject in effect stands in for the camera. In a voyeuristic relation, when the spectator occupies the place of the camera as source of the look, the subject in the cinematic apparatus is set up as the center and origin of meaning, because the image and the points-of-view of spectator, camera—and indeed projector—collide."  

Folding this logic back onto the Durer woodcut while thinking about the constructed relationships of the two mapped perspectives, it is evident that Durer is implicating the viewer of the woodcut in his construction of the female body. In this sense, Durer is actively constructing a way of looking at the female body that the viewer is expected to participate in.

Not only is the scholarly looking draughtsman safely hidden behind the grid that he uses as a technical ploy; he also sits upright, while the female model reclines, exposing her rhetorically covered genitals to him. Most strikingly, the second tool the man uses is an upright stand, supposedly helping him to measure distances but whose phallic status is hard to overlook. This phallic object stands between him and her and supports the prisonlike aspect of the grid. This is the law of perspective. It turns the female body into a figure.

It is important to note that the vanishing point of the draftsman's gaze is the "rhetorically covered" vulva of the female. The draping fabric functions as a veiling system of the female genitalia, veiling the lack of the "upright stand" or as Courbet would call it "The Origin of the World." This "upright stand" is interesting because if you traced the recession of objects depicted in the image, one would find that the constructed perspective is wrong. This is demonstrated most aptly by tracing the recession of the edge of the tabletop where the draftsman is sitting. There you will find that the obelisk is not resting on the table but hovering above his lap like an erect penis.

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13 Kuhn, Annette, 59.
14 Mieke Bal quoted by Justine Clarke, 37.
15 See the portion of this thesis titled Under the Section Duchamp for a further discussion of the veiling of female genitalia. For a discussion of Courbet see figures 2.30-2.31.
Generative section diagramming Courbet’s Origin of the World onto the site of the Church of St. Cosmas and Damien.

Generative section diagramming “Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude” onto the site of the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian. The church thus becomes the “neutral recorder” or the rational viewer of the reclining female. The grid apparatus is depicted as the church façade, while the reclining nude marks the archeological pit.
Under the Section Forma Urbis

**Figure 2.9**

Site Plan at the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian and its surrounding area.

**Figure 2.10**

View of Site. The brick façade with the windows is the former location of the Forma Urbis. To the left is the Basilica of Maxentius. On the right is the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian. The Space in front of the Church is the excavated archeological. The panels of the map can be visually retraced on its original location by following the holes left from the bronze clamps that attached the 4 inch thick marble panels to the structural brick. These holes, which mark the loss of its "decorative" skin, and the pattern created by them, should be thought of as a screen or filter with which to view the façade of the church. Between this façade and the Via Dei Fori Imperiali now exist another form of retracing, that of an archeological pit. Currently under excavation, this area is being studied in hopes of discovering more fragments of the Forma Urbis, but more importantly, the pit demarcates an interior space to operate upon and delineates a potential (and needed) passageway between the Via Dei Fori Imperiali and the Roman Forum.
Passage:

When I look at the generative image of the site passage or the perspective passage, between the Via Dei Fori Imperiali and the Roman Forum, I see a series of membranous layers that you walk on. These layers are cushioned or slightly bouncy. There is freedom for the membrane to move vertically as pressure is exerted upon it. In a way it could be considered a form of resilient flooring. It’s intention is to give and slightly cushion the foot, but not much, just enough for one to notice the difference on the approach. The material, stretched leather over a thin structure, becomes the Duchamp arm which holds the illuminated light. In plan, it could also be read as a leg or at least one of the spread legs of duchamp’s diorama. Simultaneously, it is skin-like and plastic. Both supple and artificial. It could be thought of as an entryway or maybe a threshold to the diorama. It is held into place by a heavy framing device, otherwise known as the bezel which is an excessive and lucid installation. (see the thesis section titled And the Retable) This semi-wrapped bezel looms over the archeological pit like a lifted jewel or newly discovered fragment. It appears frozen in the process of removal or maybe halted in the process of installation. Below and to the right, the archeological pit is encased or sealed in a waxy type of substance. This is an effort to preserve the streaked layers of compressed time. The wax is a seal, marking the emblematic nature of the pit and the fragments of excavated history. Emblem finds its roots in the Latin word emblema- inlaid or mosaic work. Em+blema something put on. There is an assumption here that this waxy infill is a drape covering over the archeological pit. This drape has a milky gelatinous feel as if it could be molded or utilized as a filling. It sits just above the ground, careful not to touch the ancient level which looks remarkably like the contemporary level. This space is to be thought of as an inverted dome. Could it also be a hospital gown veiling the space of incision? A cape of sorts which drapes the body while getting your hair done. The cape in a sense decontextualizes the body. It isolates the head in order to exaggerate the geometry’s of the head, Most importantly, this emblematic infill functions as a mirror-reflecting but also distorting the Oculus Façade as well as the viewer who looks inside.

1 Dalia Judovitz describes this hand and the illuminated light as functioning as a quotation of Gustave Courbet’s painting “woman with a parott.” She then goes on to say “Replacing the parrot, the ‘phallic’ upturn of the gas lamp illuminates Duchamp’s invitation to the spectator to renew his or her ‘gaze,’ by literally casting painting in a new light. While drawing on the conventions of painting, Duchamp’s installation of the plaster cast nude also announces its imminent demise. The androgynous character of the nude, manifest in the deictical gesture of the raised arm with the gas lamp, activates the nude as the potential agent, or subject, rather than as a mere object of display.” Judovitz, Dalia, Unpacking Duchamp: Art in transit (Berkely: University of California Press, 1995) 209. The light in this sense functions as a mirror by returning the gaze, in a manner reminiscent to durer’s use of the windows and the torqued display of the female’s body. This is an example of the reversal or slippage of subject/ object which also occurs in the Durer woodcut.
Figure 2.11
Section thru passageway from Via dei Fiori Imperiali to the Roman Forum
figure 2.12
Generative Site Plan
figure 2.13
Site Plan illustrating the textual mapping of the Durer and Duchamp perspective constructions onto the site of the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian.
Figure 2.14
Conceptual collage of the implementation of the Durer Diagram onto the site
The skinning of the side façade demarcates the location of the penetrations (windows) to the exterior of the scene in Durer’s “Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude.” The skin, structured off of the side façade, is thought of as a loose, fleshy membrane that breathes. This membrane encases and preserves the passageway between the Via Dei Fori Imperiali and the Roman Forum.
The loose fleshy membrane is attached at random intervals and pleated in order for the "drapery" to breathe with the wind. The section illustrates the connection of the structure to the side chapel of the church. This is a hinge to the Baroque scenes which are framed within the side chapels of the Church. See figure 4.1.
figure 2.17
Elevation at the Oculus façade

A textual replacement of the “lost decorative skin” of the Forma Urbis map.
The oculus façade is the frame within a frame, the eye of the vanishing point.
the nested dome of Vittone, the veiled vulva of Durer’s woodcut, the exposed vulva of Duchamp’s
Etant Donnes, registration plane of Durer’s perspective grid, the screen of Duchamp’s brick wall,
and the lens of the cinematic apparatus.
figure 2.18
Conceptual Collage of the archeological pit
It is important to note that the pit is viewed as something that is looked into.
The front plane is a screen for looking through.
preliminary (as well as generative) study of “skinned façade” - a replacement (a supplementary mat) of the lost “decorative skin”

I was thinking about a method of displaying the marble panels so that the grain patterns are mirror images of each other. This was an effort to recall the spread legs of Duchamp’s “Etant Donnes,” Courbet’s “Origin of the World” and the veiled genitals of Durer’s woodcut.
At the end of a narrow, underlit room, little more than a corridor, stands an ancient weather-worn door of wood, arched and encased in a surround of bricks. One senses at once that the door cannot be opened but one is drawn towards it as if by a magnet, and as one comes close one becomes aware of two small holes, at eye level, drilled through the wood. Beyond the door lies an extraordinary sight.¹

¹ Judovitz, Dalia, 199.
On a plane parallel to the door and some few feet beyond is a brick wall with a large uneven opening punched through it. Beyond and bathed in an almost blinding light is the figure of a recumbent woman moulded with great delicacy and veracity but also slightly troubling because of the illusion of three dimensionality is strong but not totally convincing (the figure is in fact in about three quarter relief). She lies on a couch of twigs and branches and she opens her legs out towards the spectator with no false prurience or sense of shame.\(^2\)

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\(^2\) Jodovitz, Dalia, 202.
Duchamp’s perspective construction Etant Donnes can be read as both a critique and re-envisioning of Durer’s Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Nude. Meticulously constructed over a period of twenty years, Marcel Duchamp Duchamp’s piece now resides as a permanent installation in the Philadelphia Museum of Fine Arts.

The diagram above aids in understanding this perspective construction as a quotation of the Durer diagram. Clearly depicted are the reclining nude and the viewing screen with its irregular opening. Replacing the “upright stand,” or the apparatus that aids in measuring the object viewed is that of the wooden doors with its two peepholes.

“The brick wall also acts as a screen, blocking a view, already restricted by the peepholes of Given. This wall marks the site of an ambiguous passage, since it is unclear whether the break in the door acts as a “doorway” for the nude or whether it is more like a window whose solid frame impedes the viewer’s visual perception of the scene. … The opening in the brick wall acts as a doorway, whose shape frames and thus brings the visible into view, while bracketing it off as a screen.”

But where is the neutral recorder?

Recalling Durer’s invitation to become an active participant in the diagram and folding in the relationship to the cinematic apparatus, it is clear that Duchamp is placing the person who peers through the peepholes as the voyeur (neutral recorder?). “Like a voyeur caught at a peephole, the viewer is aware of having been caught looking, aware of the looking’s carnal qualities.”

To be discovered at a keyhole is thus to be discovered as a body; it is to thicken the situation given to consciousness to include the hither space of the door, and to make the viewing body an object for consciousness…Having sought the peephole of Etant Donnes, Duchamp’s viewer has in fact entered a kind of optical machine through which it is impossible not to see.

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3 Judovitz, Dalia, 212.
4 Clarke, Justine, 36.
Shall we return to the view through the peepholes and consider another approach?

Through the peep-holes in the door it looks like a body offered up to love, but seen in the photographs of the manual it is a mutilated doll, or the innards of a human body being placed on a sacrificial altar. We are presented with an extraordinary example of the surrealist 'double image' in the tradition of Daliesque paranoid criticism: we see a desirable feminine figure, but we know that it is an incomplete and artificial being.6

Let us pause on this view for a while?

The basket case

"Headless. And also footless. Often armless too; and almost always unarmed, except with poetry and passion. There they are, the surrealist women so shot and painted, so stressed and dismembered, punctured and severed: Is it any wonder they have (we have) gone to pieces?"

"Give them their head: they had one."7 The term architectural term capital is derived from the word "kaput" which is Latin for head. Its pertinence within the course of the argument evident when you consider the origin of the Corinthian order. I look to Vitruvius for answers: "The third order, called Corinthian, is an imitation of the slenderness of a maiden; for the outlines and limbs of maidens, being more slender on account of their tender years, admit of prettier effects in the way of adornment."8 While I have previously elaborated upon the Greek derivation of cosmos meaning adornment and arrangement (order), I have not enumerated how the Corinthian order intersects this arrangement in and around the basket Case. Vitruvius speaks again:

It is related that the original discovery of this form of capital was as follows. A freeborn maiden of Corinth, just of marriageable age, was attacked by an illness and passed away. After her burial, her nurse, collecting a few little things which used to give the girl pleasure while she was alive, put them in a basket, carried it to the tomb, and laid it on top thereof, covering it with a roof-tile so that the things might last longer in the open air. This basket happened to be placed just above the root of an acanthus. The acanthus root pressed down meanwhile though it was by the weight, when springtime came round put forth leaves and stalks in the middle, and the stalks, growing up along the sides of the basket, and pressed out by the corners of the tile through the compulsion of its weight, were forced to bend into volutes at the outer edges.9

He then explains that Callimachus, who was renown for his artistry, happened to notice the tomb. "Delighted" with the basket and its intertwined ornament, he then designed the column Order later to be named "Corinthian." The bodily narrative concerning the origin of the three orders is also extended to the both the Doric and Ionic Order. Again through the words of Vitruvius, I will expand upon the later. "At the foot they substituted the base in place of a shoe; in the capital they placed the volutes.

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9 Vitruvius, 104.
hanging down at the right and left like curly ringlets, and ornamented its front with cymatia and with
festoons of fruit arranged in place of hair, while they brought the flutes down the whole shaft, falling
like the folds in the robes worn by matrons."

The origins of weaving lie in Greek culture, in which women had no citizenship and were
allowed to play no active part. In providing an explanation for the anomaly of a contribution
to culture made by women, Sigmund Freud suggest that women originated weaving by the
plaiting of pubic hair in order to mask the absence of the penis and what the penis represents
in society: the phallus and the power to prescribe and inscribe lines of legitimacy. 10

The word plait means to braid as pleat or fold as of cloth, to braid as hair or straw, and to make as a
mat, by braiding, pleat --from the root folded. Plait is related to the word ply. ply, which means one
thickness or layer as in certain wood products and is a derived from the word Plicare, to fold or bend
(recalling the Baroque motif of multiple folds of drapery). A mat is a piece of fabric made of plaited
or woven rushes, straw, hemp, or similar fiber, or of some other pliant material as rubber used as a
protective covering on a floor or other surface. It can also mean to cover with or as if with mats or
matting; to form into a mat, as by interweaving; to become entangled or form tangled mass. The mat
is also a supplemental frame, a frame within a frame, and it is related to the word matte which is a
description of a cosmetic powder that is intended to blend in with the natural skin coloring.

Sure and strident, ready to do anything we can except that she can neither speak nor think nor
see, nor walk and run, certainly not love and paint and write and be. Surrealist woman,
problematic and imprisoned, for the other eyes. She may be framed, but she is not whole. 11

Is this the view I am intended to take part in?

‘framing’ is what narrators do with words, and what we do with visions. Jonathan culler
proposed this term as a more useful alternative for ‘context.’ He wrote, ‘since the phenomena
criticism deals with are signs, forms with socially constituted meanings, one might try to
think not of context but of the framing of signs: how are signs constituted (framed) by
discursive practices, institutional arrangements, systems of value, semiotic mechanisms.” 12

The two opposing perspective machines are framed together within the context of this thesis in order
to elicit multiple narrative constructions. Reading them together and with architectural diagramming
(mapping) leads to a more nuanced consideration than either alone would provide. The Duchamp
construction is a catalyst for critical readings of the Durer woodcut. Simultaneously, the woodcut

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11 Caw, Mary Ann, 53-54.
evokes different methods of spatial and visual mappings onto the site of the Forma Urbis as well as within the arrangement of an architectural argument. When combined with Duchamp's Etant Donnes, the site of the Forma Urbis and the Durer woodcut, the montage illustrates the multiple layers of visual as well as textual associations.

figure 2.24
set up of Etant Donnes as photographed by Marcel Duchamp in his New York City Studio

The photograph is one of many which comprise the Manual for Instructions of Etant Donnes prepared by Duchamp in anticipation of the pieces moving to another location. The book carefully articulates in instructions as well as photographs how to reassemble each piece. The voyeur of the piece is unaware of the construction's elaborate layout until he chooses to flip through the pages of the Manual which is also on display in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. For me this view is striking because it underscores the time, effort, and the thinking process Duchamp underwent in order to manifest his (your?) view through the peepholes.

Figure 2.25 left
Brick screen inserted between the voyeur and the diorama beyond. It functions as the mediator and is also the plane of registration, the slicing plane and the "thin membrane inscribed with the registration of materials being sliced."

Figure 2.26 below
A diagram of the construction of "Etant Donnes" in its final assembled state. Notice the location of the "screen" wall in relationship to the wooden doors. The actual dimension of this space is 1m 53 cm tall by 83 cm wide and 1.15 meters deep.
figure 2.27
Etant Donnes Diagram with added brick wall of the Church of St. Cosmas & Damian.
A merging of the Forma Urbis and Etant Donnes.

figure 2.28
Etant Donnes Diagram with added brick wall of the Church of St. Cosmas & Damian.
figure 2.29
Rene Magritte, “Representation”, 1937
The depilated Surrealist female body

figure 2.30
Rene Magritte, “Le Viol”, 1934
The head of the Surrealist woman is replaced with her body.
The woman is represented as a basket case. It is interesting to note she is framed by hair, but depicted clean.
This image serves as a hinge (intensified detail) between Courbet, Duchamp, and Durer. “Origin” can be read as the returned gaze of the author (voyeur or draftsman) in the Durer woodcut. This image was chosen because of the grid of the picture panels, the folds of the fabric, and the depiction of the reclining female figure. I was thinking that it represented a modern depiction of what the draughtsman would see through his grid apparatus.

Courbet’s original image “L’origine du Monde” (translation: Origin of the World)
The original image by Courbet. Duchamp recontextualizes this image in his construction “Etant Donnes.” Note this similarity in the postures of the two females. It is also representative of the basket case as well as cutting in so far as the figure is cropped to illustrate the distance (or lack thereof) between the viewer to the subject (canvas or registration plane) of the painting.
Antiquated trades survive within these inner spaces, and the merchandise on display is unintelligible, or has several meanings. Already the inscriptions and signs on the entranceways (one could just as well say “exits” since, with these peculiar hybrid forms of house and street, every gate is simultaneously entrance and exit), already the inscriptions which multiply along the walls within, where here and there between overloaded coat stands a spiral staircase rises into darkness—already they have about them something enigmatic. “Albert at No. 83” will in all likelihood be a hairdresser, and “theatrical tights” will be silk tights; but these insistent letterings want to say more. And who would have the courage to take the dilapidated stairs up one flight to the beauty salon of professor Alfred Bitterlin... Many are the institutes of hygiene, where gladiators are wearing orthopedic belts and bandages wind round the white bellies of mannequins. In the windows of the hairdressers, one sees the last women with long hair: they sport richly undulating masses, petrified coiffures. How brittle appears the stonework of the walls beside them and above: crumbling papier-mâché!

“Narrative Strands”

The following three passages are excerpted from the Web site “Hair Inquiry” by Anne Wilson. Each excerpt is quoted in its entirety in order to illustrate the varied interpretations of the impact and significance hair can have on the maintenance and development of identity.

Richard House

My uncle is tidying up the house that he shared with my grandmother. Nana died two years ago just before Christmas and Bryn is just now selling the house. I wanted something to remember her by and was offered her diaries. As soon as I said yes I realized how odd it was - that even though she is dead, the diaries are still private. I read them anyway, and was disappointed to find a very dull list, saying what time she got up, who she visited, where she shopped; nothing particularly personal. There are a number of references to the woman who permed her hair, but I couldn't find anything in them about me. I did find one of her hairs though. It sprang up from the pages as I was putting one of the diaries away. Her hair was always a little thin and very blue from the perm. I was quite shocked by this hair, which carried with it much more weight and memory than ten years of listing walks, trips to town, and hair appointments with her neighbor; and it occurred to me that I was taking the writing too literally. So I started looking at the diaries differently, looking for changes in handwriting, days also when she wouldn't write - the long spaces after grandad died - and found a different story there.2

Sarah Gjertson,

As a young teenager, I engaged in what most kids that age did - trying to find out who the hell I was. I was into hardcore music, torn clothes, safety pins, lots of earrings, colored hair - the works. Now, in retrospect, this activity was probably no more than just another fashion clichÉ - but at the time, I found great pleasure in the "dressing up" of my life and considered it quite fun that I could change my appearance at will. When I first started this experimenting, my mother chalked it up to, "she's just rebelling" and figured it was a phase I would pass through, like the year I liked rainbows and unicorns.

I'm sure she was surprised when she realized it was more than just a phase, and that I actually enjoyed looking weird. My hair was cut stranger, shaved in places, dyed more colors and defied gravity with gels, sprays, spritzes and other fascinating hair products. The 6th & 7th earholes were about all she could take.

She explained that she had been more than patient with these escapades of mine. I learned that she was completely embarrassed of me. My hair was ugly, and what was I trying to prove with cutting and dyeing it those garish colors? She dreaded being seen in public with me, saying I looked like a freak and a "ragamuffin," that wearing torn clothes made her look bad. It didn't matter that I was on the honor roll at school, only that my appearance reflected poorly on her. She also expressed paranoia that I was doing drugs and "God knows what else" (i.e. profound fear that I might be sexually active). Her anger grew over the months, and she became convinced at some point that I did things just to spite her. "You used to be such a pretty girl," she'd say.

2 - Richard House, http://www.artic.edu/%7Eawilso/
I can't remember exactly what precipitated the cutting of my hair. I think I had come home late a couple times (not a hard stretch with a 10 pm curfew), got caught sneaking out to be with my friends - something became a catalyst and the removal of my hair was to be the punishment. My mother smiled wide at the prospects of removing this token of her embarrassment. I believe she figured that some of my attempts at individuality would be flushed down the toilet with my hair.

Which isn't to say that I welcomed the prospect AT ALL. I begged, pleaded, cried for her not to cut it - anything but my hair, that I had worked so hard to get its recent shades of burgundy and white. I had not appreciated until that impending moment how closely my sense of self was to my hair. It set me apart, which is where I wanted to be in the process of my teenage self-definition. Control of my hair was control of me, or compensating for a lack of control I felt otherwise.

Despite what seemed like hours of arguing, my attempting to convince her that nothing was wrong with me, I could not persuade her. In her mind, she had every right to cut the stuff off after all the upset I had caused her. It was final. She invited a friend to watch.

I sat on the porch of our apartment, with my eyes squinted shut as she snipped, not wanting to know what would be left - or how I would have to "fix" my scissor-chopped head. She was pulling a "Mommie Dearest" on me. I couldn't believe it.

Fortunately, there was enough left to work with - hair, that is. In her triumphant mood, my mother figured she would also discard all items of my clothing that had rips, tears, or paint on them (3/4 of my wardrobe). Crammed in a hefty bag with my colored locks, these symbols of my personhood were thrown away.

My experience of losing my hair, although not through disease or random accident, was traumatizing yet enlightening. Certainly my story is full of over-protective paranoia and betrayal. But I realized that this plain brown stuff on my head was not only a site of defining an identity for myself, but also a place of resistance. Over the years it became clearer that hair had the potential to exist in multiple ways, beyond conformity or nonconformity. It was (and is) a place to find comfort with one's self, a link to one's ancestors or family of ethnic origin, a vehicle to express individuality or invisibility, a commentary on a larger structure of the prescribed politics of appearance. Hair is home.

C.J. Mitchell, USA

I just cut my hair last night. I had long dreadlocks that came to my shoulders. I had been growing my hair for about 4 years. I had been thinking about it all weekend so I decided to do it. I related it to being tired and needing a change. A friend of my passed last week. I did not at first relate this to my friend passing but now as I examine this I see a correlation. Life is brief, and no one knows when their life will end, so do the things you want to do. Now that I have cut my hair I feel a new freedom. I cut it all! I now see how my head is shaped. I can now feel the slightest breeze. I enjoy this. To maintain my hair, it had become a ritual that I did not enjoy, not to say I did not like my hair, I loved my hair. After I cut my hair, I saved the locks. I was thinking about making a piece about my locks or make something with them. I was examining my locks, now away from my head. I could see the different stages in my locks and related them to different periods in my life. I don't know if this is very clear but these our my thoughts on cutting my locks.

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3 Gjerstson, Sarah, http://www.artic.edu/%7Eawilso/
Vittone’s Domes

Figure 3.2
The multiple layered “screen” dome. In order to facilitate directed light sources a series of nested domes were penetrated to illuminate particular surfaces. Also depicted is the “eaten away” Pendentive as invented by Vittone.
figure 3.3
Vittone's stretched membranes of vaulting

figure 3.4
Window detail of the side chapel. Here one is able to see how the double shell dome allocates lighting into the side chapels of the church. This also allows the dome to be read as a series of thin membranes penetrated by light.
figure 3.5
Vittone's hollowed out pendentive.

figure 3.6
Vittone's carving out of the pendentive.
There is an underlying (and unpacked, this stand of thought is for my next thesis) relationship to the penetrating of the pendentive (which is the triangle piece transferring the square of the vault supports and the circular frame of the dome.) and the hymenal layers of this project. It is important to note that the triangle shape is analogous to the Venus mound.
And the Retable

Figure 3.8
a peculiar image which I named "duchampesque"
What led me to this image?

The previous image (figure 3.8) originally found itself hanging on my studio wall amongst many other images that I called my “visual thinkmap” (Figure 1.10). It was chosen for no particular reason except that it bore a remarkable resemblance to the view through the peepholes of Duchamp’s *Etant Donnés*. Of course, at the time I did not realize the Duchamp image was a view through a peephole, nor did I know that the image deemed “duchampesque” was actually sculptural and not what I thought it was— a painting. Curiously, the shape also resembled the bundled drapery covering the genitalia of the recumbent nude in Durer’s woodcut as well as reminded me of the illuminated domes that played a prominent role in the “visual thinkmap.” It was not until I began to uncover the narratives behind the images that I began to see how they were more than visually connected. “Duchampesque” is actually a photo of former vault that was pierced and transformed into a lantern to illuminate the altarpiece (the Transparente) described below.

In Castile the most celebrated example of this new style is the Transparente in Toledo Cathedral designed by Narciso Tome in 1721. It stands with its back to the high altar of the Gothic Cathedral and occupies the full height of a bay of the ambulatory. In structure, it consists of a single concave bay, flanked on each side by two superimposed columns, the entablatures of which curve steeply downwards to create an effect of greater depth for the niche— a device recalling some of Borromini’s tombs in the Lateran. On the actual mensa of the alter stand marble putti who carry a sort of tabernacle with statues of the Virgin and Child enclosed in a niche, the top of which is more than a semi-circle—possibly an echo of Moorish arches— and seems to close in on them like pincers. Immediately above is a glory of angels round the mystic rose of the Virgin more riotous than anything that Bernini ever invented. Above this again is the ‘upper room’, in which Christ and the Apostles are eating the Last Supper, and at the very top stands St. Longinus, holding the spear which pierced Christ’s side. The Transparente has neither Salomonic columns nor estipites but its columns are equally strange in their own way. They are fluted, but the fluting is covered with an imitation of either torn parchment or skin, probably the latter, because the effect recalls the partially skin-covered skeletons which late gothic and mannerist sculptors loved to add to their tombs. The sinister character which the device has in the tomb sculpture is cancelled out in the Transparente by the cherubs’ heads which peep out through the interstices of the “skin”

The Transparente described above is relative to the thesis beyond its excessive and active ornamentation. It can be read as another enactment of the Durer diagram, and more importantly enacts the diagram in a spatial manner. Referring to figure 3.9, the section at the ambulatory of the Toledo Cathedral, one can see the location of the Transparente in relationship to the high altar of the Cathedral. The altarpieces are separate decorative skins applied to the same structural masonry wall and are connected via a hole that serves to illuminate the tabernacle of the high altar. On the
Transparente side, the hole is veiled by golden sunbeams which marks a passageway between the static uprights of the Gothic, high altar, and the fleshy, curves of the retable. The sunbeams, the tabernacle beyond, and the light that passes through the hole denote the screen-like quality of this space and relate to the Durer diagram in so far as it becomes the grid apparatus for "seeing through." 

In this sense, a theoretical dialogue occurs between the Baroque space (which in the course of this thesis has been "read" via the feminine) of the retable and the Gothic space of the high altar.

Overlaying this relationship back onto the site of the Forma Urbis, the space of the high altar becomes a stand in for the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian while its exterior façade, the former location of the Forma Urbis map, is equated with structural wall separating the "decorative skins" of the Transparente and the high altar. Following the logic of the Durer diagram and a baroque-vision (characterized as a vacillation between subject and object which changes the status of both), the question to be asked is "what is this screen viewing and how is that which is on view looking back?"

As you pass through the ambulatory behind the high alter space, you become a witness to the fantastic events of the altarpiece (the Transparente) as well as being witnessed by the sculptural figures who stand in shadow against the bright light of the penetration in the vaulting above (figures 3.8, 3.12). The shadow clearly marks the silhouettes of the figures, but does not disguise the fact that they were looking down viewing you, the beholder, as well as its counterpart, the Transparente.

These figures disguise the cold audacity of Narciso Tome’s effort to "shed light" onto the altarpiece of the Transparente by penetrating the Gothic vaulting of the ambulatory with a lantern. In section, the addition of the oculus (lantern) reads as a grotesque protrusion amongst the structural buttresses of the Cathedral but was necessary in order to get the proper height and angle needed for adequate illumination of the altar. The beholder stands as a witness to this face off between the oculus and the altarpiece, but is also distracted by another illuminated hole which sits like an architectural hairdo atop the pendentive of the retable and has previously been described as the apparatus for "seeing through" in the Durer diagram. As the eye of the observer moves over the retable, up to the oculus and back down, the viewer is a witness to another type of fleshy circumstance-those of the "two superimposed columns" flanking each side of the retable. In typical baroque fashion, the columns are frozen in a moment of transformation, for the "skin" covering is in the process dripping and oozing.

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4 The retable is the decorative structure raised above an altar at the back often forming a frame for a picture, bas-relief, or something similar.
off to expose the perfectly fluted and gilded columns below. This dripping, oozing skin is manifested onto the site of the Forma Urbis as the sagging surface of the “Baggy Wall” (figure 2.14) and also recalls the Baroque period motif of folded drapery and fabric. Upon closer inspection, one notices another set of “eyes” watching you, the viewer of the scene. The “cherub’s heads which peep out through the interstices of the skin” underscore the moment of transformation by mapping, mirroring, or reflecting back the gaze of viewer.

Thus, the Transparente and its multiple spatial relationships of looking, looking back, and transformation also theoretically map another form of transformation— that of the research process where images, narratives and the relationships amongst them transform a series of images into a network of associations constantly are in the process marking relationships and rewriting histories.

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7 For another connection to fluting see the description of “the basket case” in the section of this thesis titled Under the Section Duchamp. Guild and guilding are related for two reasons. First because Durer interest in the arts begun during his apprenticeship as a goldsmith. Secondly, there exist a connection between the maintenance of female appearance and the pharmakon. “Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman’s scepter, the mind shapes itself to the body, and, roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adorn its prison.” Mary Wollstonecraft quoted by Freda Kerner Furman in Facing the Mirror: Older Women and Beauty Shop Culture (New York: Routledge, 1997) 45. The desire for beauty (the poison) creates a need for beauty (the cure). Is it necessary to gilt that which is already beautiful?
The poche clearly depicts the space (the hole) connecting the Transparente (on the left side of the depicted poche) with the High Altar (the right side of the depicted poche). Veiled by golden sunbeams, this hole marks a passageway between the static uprights of the Gothic period high altar and the fleshy curves of the retable. Also notice the relationship between the retable and the penetration through the vault which was added to illuminate the altar. The sculptural aspects continue up the altar, along the underside of the vault, around the oculus and into the “lantern.” The lantern’s window is framed by trompe l’oeil paintings and bas-relief figures.
The Transparente by Narciso Tome designed in 1721 and completed in 1732. Located in the ambulatory behind the high Altar of the Toledo Cathedral.
This image illustrates the spatial relationship between the oculus and the Transparente. Directed light from the unseen window above illuminates the shadowy ambulatory. As you pass through the space you become a witness to the events of the altarpiece as well as being witnessed by the sculptural figures which frame the penetration above.
The oculus which illuminates the Altar of the Transparente. Clearly depicted is this image is the addition of the Transparente and its oculus amongst the original Gothic period structure. The altar's forms are foreshortened to give the illusion of a deep apse-like recess. The illumination of the hidden window above underscores this affect as well as silhouettes the sculptural figures that frame the penetration of the oculus.
APPENDIX

Figures 4.1-4.6
figure 4.1
Bernini's Blessed Beata Ludovica
figure 4.2
Bernini's Scala Regia stairway
(entranceway to the Vatican)
figure 4.3
Boromini’s false perspective at the Palazzo Spada
figure 4.4
San Carlo Alla Quatro Fontane by Boromini
View from lantern looking onto the floor.
Note the similarity of floor pattern to Piranesi's Ampio Magnifico Collegio.
figure 4.5
Baroque Side chapel with oculus to let light in.
figure 4.6

"Office Baroque" by Gordon Matta Clarke

Another form of architectural cutting whose material is the derelict building.

Mediated by the camera lens, all that remains of this artwork are the photographic collages.
REFERENCES


