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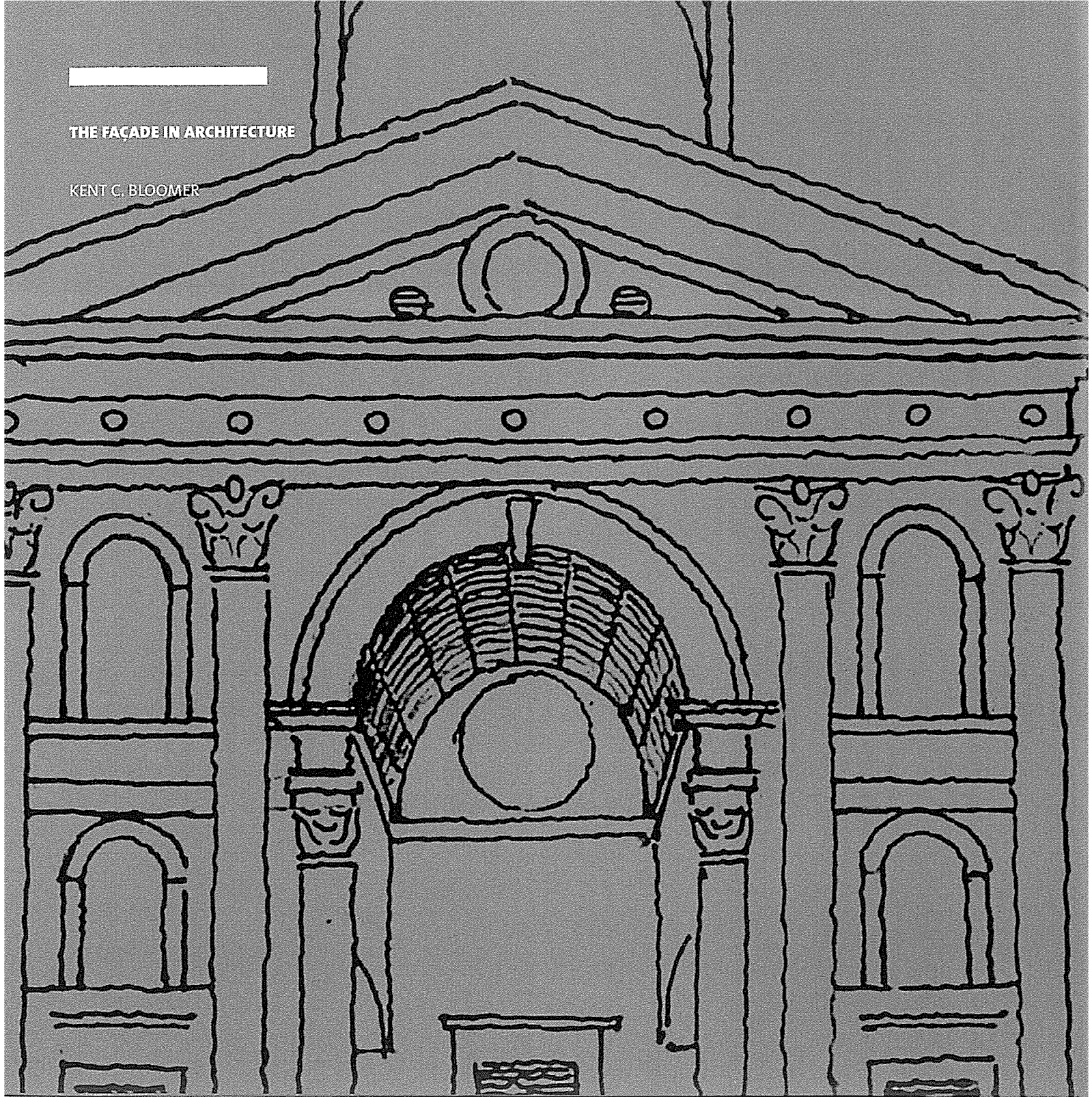
ARIEL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

“THE FAÇADE IN ARCHITECTURE”

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THE FAÇADE IN ARCHITECTURE

KENT C. BLOOMER



Traditionally, in western architecture, the façade has been regarded as the public face of a building which usually, but not necessarily, is located on the front side of a building. Façades mark the primary approach and entrance-place between the public domain and an enclosed interior. They address a threshold, a pause between the outdoors and the sequestered microcosm of dwelling, meeting, and working within.

The term "façade" implicates the form of the human face. Its anthropomorphic root typifies the conventional terminology of classical architectural elements such as "footing" for foundation and "capital" for the top of a post. Because the architectural term "façade" alludes to a feature innate to our bodies, it may be considered a 'conventionalized' face or 'architecturalized' facing forward.

Physical motion is absent in the rigid structure of a building or walled precinct, unlike the lived "façade" which is fluid and capable of expressing immediate emotions. Still, as children demonstrate, drawing and animating facial caricatures is not that difficult or even complicated. Indeed, scholars of facial expression have noted that there are only six graphically-explicit expressions common to all cultures which are: happiness, sadness, fear, surprise, anger, and delight, some of which can be hybridized to evoke a nuanced range of complex emotions.

However, expressing immediate feelings is not a conventional province of the architectural façade's inclination to proclaim personal, public, or cultural values and expectations rather than emotions per se. The façade registers degrees of power, wealth, sanctity, and civility. In the mid-industrial age, it identified a variety of emerging public institutions such as a bank, office building, railroad station, barbershop, or hospital. Domestic façades might allude to some rank of social status, whereas great public façades may address the greater PLACE of a building in a natural, urban, or historic surround.

Those expressions have been achieved by a dressing up, out, and over structural facts of building. In the Renaissance, naked construction was expected to be dressed over if the

project was to be regarded as "architecture" per se. Rudiments of building (rubble) were unworthy of sight. Yet, designs of 'perfected construction', presented as conventionalized arches and columns, were made visible as architectural 'ideas' (fig.1). Incorporating the visual idea of face within the idealized fabric of architecture produced an empathic 'interface', a reflection between one's self and the 'self' of the building. Imagine the facial ghost (fig.2) in a looming entryway serving as an imagined mirror of our presence as we 'face-off' with a façade. It is within the framework of a dynamic symmetry, a chora between two beings, that a sensual convergence may generate a dynamic equilibrium between bodies in the same place at the same time. Our reaching and looking out become entangled with the other's reaching and looking back.

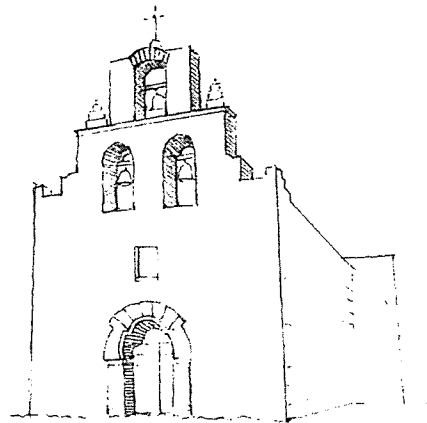
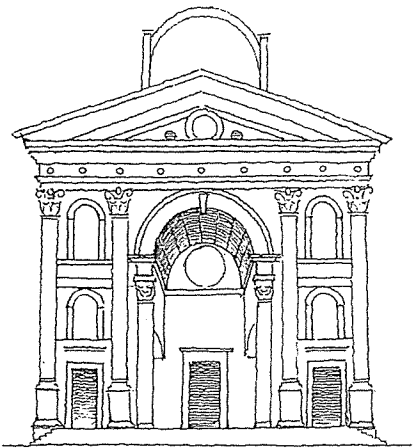


Figure 1:
Basilica di Andrea, 1472-90, Mantua, Italy; Leon Batista Alberti architect, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

Figure 2:
Mission Espada, 1690, San Antonio County, Texas, USA, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

Let me illustrate the physical mechanics of that engagement by asking you to imagine a cat prowling down a bushy garden path. The cat is in a state of "mobile orientation" to the linear pathway which corresponds to the axis of his long feline body. His face, looking forward, serves as the leading edge of motion. Suddenly there is a rustling in the thick brush to the right and the cat rotates his head 90° to confront the threat. Immediately the muscles in his left foreleg and left rear leg are tensioned, (fig.3) to allow the cat to perform a whole-body

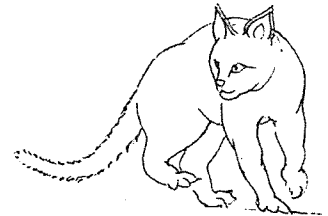


Figure 3:
Cat, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

lurch to the right. His left side has become his back side. The mobilized orientation of the cat's face, rather than the anatomical formation of the cat's whole body, determines his momentary orientation to front-back.

While facial orientation controls our sense of front-back, left-right, it is the earth's gravitational force that determines our sense of up-down. Taken together, those inner and other-directed orientations entangle our bodies with our environment.

The prospect of that entanglement inspired the classical builder and architect to establish a place-of-encounter and negotiation (fig.4) in which to entertain the moments of attraction, repulsion, invitation or forbiddance, and to instigate some respect and hesitation during a moment of arrival. An accomplished designer can then proceed to embed a chorus of values into a façade as it is dressed and embellished, and decorated with additional content and memories wrought from the larger world in which the building is situated.

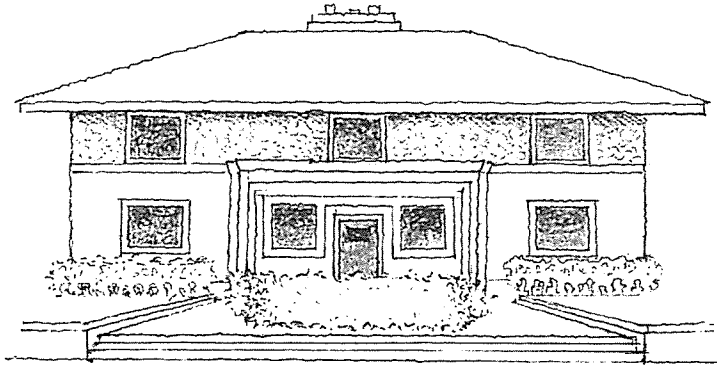


Figure 4:
Winslow House, 1894, River Forest, Illinois, USA; Frank Lloyd Wright architect, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

HONESTY

The practice of decorating in classical façades is well-known to scholars, yet decoration, and particularly ornament, were targeted in the late 20th century schools of architecture precisely for being "dress-work," and for employing uneconomic 'additives' to the basic project of building. Dress-work was even declared dishonest for covering over the materials and techniques intrinsic to the true facts of a building's basic construction, as well as deviant,

for not foregrounding the internal programmatic functions or practical spaces rationally determined for a particular building. Façades became "unnecessary" from a 'professional' standpoint. Decoration per se became regarded as 'non-essential' because its techniques may be extrinsic to the core disciplines governing the medium of architecture per se.¹

The mid-20th century was the apex of specialization, standardization and compartmentalization in which the term "medium" became an academic way of identifying a discipline's 'essential' instruments of expression. For architecture the mediums (such as paint for paintings, carved and formed substances for sculpture-in-the-round, and composed elements of sound for music) became the materials and methods of construction, and the rational formation of useful space. Other non-essential means of expressing place, including the historic, mnemonic, and cultural narratives that fueled façades historically, became regarded as secondary² to the 'essential' project of a revolutionary and more progressive architecture. A new ideology pointing to economic expressions of space appropriated the slippery slogan, "form follows function,"³ by promoting a revised and curiously edited concept of "function." Doctrines of honesty and cleanliness emerged to privilege spatial and technical efficiency. Embellishing the intrinsic details of construction or filling-out useful space with extraneous elements would contaminate the new project of tectonic expression and spatial purity.

It is true that classical façades of architecture paid limited attention to the most efficient path of entering a building in preference to encouraging a pause to savor other agendas, some of which were meant to recall typical (yet demonstrably malleable) precedents originating in other times, places, and disciplines.

The alleged 'moral' rationale proclaimed by exponents of the newly-minted 'honest' architecture has been cited as originating in John Ruskin's famous "Lamp of Truth" from his extraordinary treatise, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, published in 1848. But consider a review of what Ruskin actually said in his famous "Lamp of Truth" by reading a few words from section VII entitled "Structural Deceits:"⁴

"I have limited these (deceits) to the determined and purposed suggestion of a mode of support other than the true one. The architect is not bound to express structure; nor are we to complain of him for concealing it, any more than we should regret that the other surfaces of the human frame conceal much of its anatomy; nevertheless, that building will generally be the noblest, which to an intelligent eye discovers the great secrets of its structure although from a careless observer they may be concealed.... "

"Now there is a nice question of conscience in this which we shall hardly settle but by considering that, when the mind is informed beyond the possibility of mistake as to the true nature of things, the effecting of it with a contrary expression, however distinct, is no dishonesty, but on the contrary, a legitimate appeal to the imagination."

Ruskin goes on to say, "There is, therefore, no dishonesty, while there is much delight, in the irresistibly contrary impression." (Italics are mine.)

Ruskin is saying that the design of a building need not exclusively express its "true" structure but need only disclose an amount required to allow a sufficient discovery of its true materials and physical make-up to satisfy the "intelligent eye" as a pre-requisite to going beyond that disclosure into the world of imagination. He is declaring that we can understand both considerations at once without sacrificing one to the other.

Ruskin's reasoning makes sense. How, indeed, can a façade manifest a rich repertoire of values if its expressive features are restrained from imagining, remembering, and revering events and worlds beyond the facts of local construction and a building's rational spatial program? A prevailing default is to employ written or numerical systems of identification in lieu of decoration and ornament and thus impose the most disturbing auxiliaries to the material 'art-of-building'. Indeed, what could be more distracting than the pinning of phonetic words or numbers onto the sensual surface of architectural skins? Figures of ornament, on the other hand, physically engage and exalt the skin. But what does ornament specifically provide?

ORNAMENT

Let us visit Plato's Academy and review the ancient etymology of the term "ornament." Isidore of Seville, writing in the seventh-century AD, the final century of the Academy, stated in his Etymologies that the Greeks compared their word "cosmos" to the Latin word "ornament" because the beauty of ornament was manifested in the motions of the heavenly bodies.⁵ By so saying, the ancient Academy provides us with a glimpse of the visual content of seminal ornament. Those words suggest that ornament presents visual attributes of an all-pervasive physical activity circulating in the 'world-at-large', in a vast surrounding region, a macrocosm containing stars, and rainbows which, while being external to a body being ornamented, also contains and informs that body. Thus ornament qua cosmos evokes the situation of a building being contiguous with the world-at-large. In his Book XIII on "De Mundos et Partibus,"⁶ Isidore includes the micro-cosmos of atoms which circulate within the body. The macro-cosmos of Isidore's "mundos" is cited as harboring elements such as stars, meanders, and rainbows exhibiting eternal patterns of motion for which "no rest is allowed," a motion visualized by

ancients who assumed that earthly structures, situated within this eternal motion, were anchored to a stationary platform. In this model we might imagine the cosmos engulfing, while also moving through and around the architecture. While we no longer believe the earth is standing still, we still do assign a quality of stability to the ground upon which we build.

Unlike Isidore's indication of the cosmos as the immense realm of "ornament," Vitruvius, writing in the first century AD, declared, "decoration" should be treated with due regard to propriety.¹⁷ The term "propriety" here is implicated with the 'decorum' of the intimate social world in which we live. In that light, when we combine ornament and decoration in a work of architecture we are expected to distribute ornament and its "eternal motion" within the more fixed and civilized rules of decorum causing its lively expression to be restrained by local good taste and good manners. This comprehensive ordering system requires that ornament be distributed with decoration in command and decoration be designed with the distribution of ornament in mind. Decoration, then, is the governing visual system in architecture that situates subordinate regions of decoration, the distribution of ornament, and locates the explicit 'confessions' presenting the 'true' facts of structure. Both are materially added to and embedded into the economic forms of buildings, rooms, furnishings, and bowls. Most nineteenth-century architects who enthusiastically incorporated multiple international styles into their work respected Ruskin's thesis and limited the extent and quantity of decorated regions in order to allow parts of buildings to "confess" an amount of the basic raw structure.

It is telling that ornament may import unusually dynamic, mischievous, and rhythmized figures such as foliations, meanders, and spirals into its own finite territory within decoration. By evoking the nature of the world-at-large, the repeating figures (here I am agreeing with Owen Jones that repetition is a defining property of ornament)¹⁸ describe a type of order that is free from earthly gravity (the eternal motions within the cosmos) and thus allows an amount of turbulence that may be socially disciplined by decorum and anchored by the gravity of stabile construction. This palette of design agendas constitutes a visual richness suitable to the design of a façade. But how do we orchestrate such a wealth of visual ideas?

ORCHESTRATION

Western façades evolved to express earthly and heavenly ideas within an intuitive triadic system of organization based on the vertical posture of the human body. Regions harboring each type of expression were conventionally situated in the vertical dimension as base, shaft, entablature, or foot, body, and head. Triadic ordering also governs decoration in a variety of scales. As a rule, the bases are the most prosaic 'utilitarian' and least dressed; the shafts are slightly embellished; and entablatures are the most protrusive, exuberant, and ornamented.

Rows of columns imagined as bodies firmly stand on a raised platform supporting an entablature (table) which can be roofed over to form a decorated pediment. The classical triad of the base, column, and entablature expresses the structural idea of post-and-beam construction as it simultaneously evokes a chorus of commanding human figures which, in parts and sequences, suggest male, female, and divine proportions of width and height. The brilliance of such a system is in its capacity to simultaneously embody and visualize multiple ideas found in society, myth, memory and construction. Embedding personal and cultural ideas within the intuitive corporeal framework of a façade naturally induces our gaze to move upwards from the ground through the upright stance of our body to the head with its ruminations and speculations of the civilized earth beneath and the heavens above. From the poetic body to the poetic mind, we are prepared to imagine our situation in an immense world-scape of place and memory.

Such façades were intuitive models originating in the experienced human body and woven into a tapestry of memory to govern a grammatical system of visual composition that allowed epic expressions of mind and body to become an essential, indeed a necessary, function of architecture.

The same convention is evident in the early façades of medieval cathedrals which are also beholden to abstract medieval proportions derived from Pythagorean and neo-Platonic numerology. Yet, gothic façades still managed to evoke the upright human posture. In the façade of the early-12th-century Chartres Cathedral (fig.5) we see a powerful bilateral symmetry and the ascent upward from an arched base which transforms into the heavenly circularity of the rose window. By the 13th century the vitality of flamboyant tracery began to emerge out of geometrized expressions of structure. Later on, in the English 15th century, we see a less Platonic vision of the cosmic realm with the colossal apparition of a heart-like plant in nature (fig.6) supplanting the more geometric cosmology of a pure circle. In France, the entire façade of Rouen Cathedral, completed in the 16th century, maintains the sense of a triadic order while its details effloresce into a flamboyance of foliation evoking a turbulent canopy of surrounding nature.

In the 19th century John Ruskin, the declared anti-classicist, was particularly skeptical about the efficacy of the frozen neo-Platonic geometry also found in early Gothic proportions dedicated to canons of classical perfection or classical harmonies. He admired the florid "active rigidity"⁹ of late Gothic tracery. A keen observer of natural phenomenon, he did not believe that fixed ratios could be found in nature or by proxy in the order of the world-at-large. In the Seven Lamps he proposed a livelier and more figurative system, a strategy of

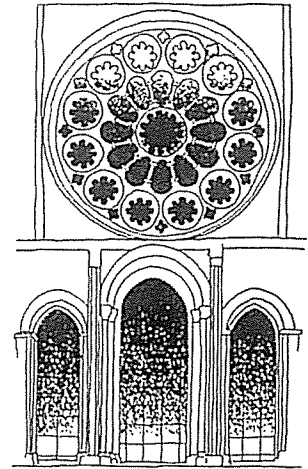


Figure 5:
Chartres, Westside, 13th c., Chartres, France,
drawing by Kent Bloomer.

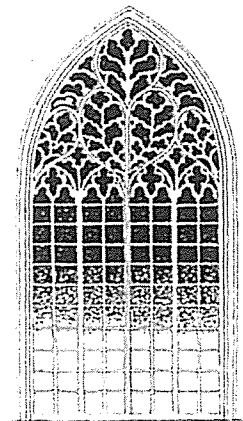


Figure 6:
York, west window, 14th c., York, England,
drawing by Kent Bloomer.

composition in which different things and agendas could be positioned side by side, rather than in the triads of humanism, similar to the way juxtapositions are found in living nature. He proposed any number of principles or "lamps" governing color, darkness, memories, and figures of life; principles that he rigorously gathered and analyzed from observing, painting, and drawing plants as well as the details of great buildings. He praised the properties in the Gothic in which he discerned a natural "changefulness."¹⁰

His international influence on the seminal industrialized architecture of the Victorian age was enormous and his thoughts became manifest in the polychrome exuberance of 19th-century façades so despised by the later 20th-century Academy. Indeed, by the early 20th century Ruskin managed to earn the wrath" of both the orthodox classicists and the fledgling modernists.

Ruskin was not a practicing architect per se. He was a thinker, a painter, and a critic of architecture. He is particularly important to our discussion of the façade because of his attempts to frame an architectural language beholden to the light and the darkness of the living nature in which we are immersed. We have to look at the work of architects who were beholden to the Seven Lamps to judge the fate of the façade in the reign of his teaching, during a century when the richness of world architecture was being discovered and recorded by travelers and historians.

Despite Ruskin's stated avoidance of anthropomorphic roots, the occult presence of the human body, which underwrote the apparition of a face, survived within Victorian architecture. Body, head, and eyes seem to appear even more frequently as they emerge from the exuberant front-oriented Victorian towers (fig.7) in ways that are more sublime than in the refined ground-level entrance portico so common in classical design. High-Victorian eyes were more ubiquitous, less rigidly governed, ferocious, and haunted.

It was the architect Owen Jones, a contemporary of Ruskin who, by rigorously analyzing the ornament of the world, (rather than confining his research to the Western excursus), illustrated the efficacy of the abstract grid for distributing ornament into an architecture of modernity. He understood that the grid was employed in ornament for thousands of years in tile work, meanders, and weaving. Jones authored the colossal encyclopedia, *The Grammar of Ornament*, compiled in 1856, after he spent five years helping to de-code the Moorish geometric decoration and color schemes of the Alhambra. The *Grammar* was a seminal step in studying, indeed defining the unique language of ornament from a global rather than a Euro-centric or Western-classical standpoint. He researched many origins of

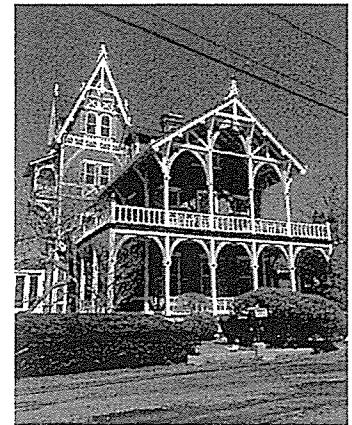


Figure 7:
William J. Clark House, 1878, Stony Creek,
Connecticut, USA; Henry Austin, architect,
Photo by Kent Bloomer.

ornament and charted their evolutions through centuries without allowing political and geographic differences to obscure its particular identity as a universal category of visual language. He demonstrated that ornament had a limited and concise vocabulary of its own kind, apart from the alphabets of other visual disciplines. Ornament was recognized by Jones as a particularly universal phenomenon employing many mediums and types of useful 'things' to be ornamented. Although he was an architect, his research also included textiles and ceramics together with a particular interest in color compositions.

Jones illustrated examples within small frames filling the pages of *The Grammar*. He analyzed the ways in which basic figures of ornament were connected and distributed into larger 'diaper' patterns described today as the repetitive square and hexagonal Cartesian grids used by geometers and cartographers to map space and to measure intricate symmetry operations.

The Grammar is remarkably rich and unbiased as it considers the original forms of many cultures¹² beyond the Greco-Roman-Western tradition. Above all, Jones was attempting to identify ornament as a universal language 'spoken' and understood by all people. Initially a scholar of Islamic design, Jones neither dismissed the importance of the classic Western triadic order nor the historic evidence of figuration derived from nature. In fact, the illustrations in the *Grammar* revealed that the majority of repeating figures in world ornament were conventionalized leaves.

Paradoxically, the Cartesian system of infinite coordinates is particularly valuable as an instrument for orchestrating or combining ideas of construction, decoration, and ornament precisely because of the grid's fundamental absence of substantial meaning. By themselves coordinates contain neither linguistic nor physical content. In their pure form, Cartesian coordinates are instruments of deduction without weight or dimension. They have no physical being. For Descartes they belonged exclusively to brain-work as distinguished from mind-and-body-work. For the designer continuous coordinates are guides belonging to fields waiting to be invested with concrete elements of use or to be endowed with meaningful figures.

DISCONTINUITY

Yet the homogeneous grid of infinity can occasionally become visually powerful and emotionally thrilling as in New York City, especially at vertices situated at the regular intersection of its streets. Cartesian axes of infinity seem to project from the ground into the third dimension to manifest extensions of up, down, and across town as they point away and into the horizon and the sky. In Manhattan we experience one of the biggest and most fantastic material

matrices ever built. It is a fabulous work of geometry that has acquired an immense amount of sensual moments as it presides over a museum-class collection of individual façades.

But its façades are not elaborations of its continuities. Their presence occurs when the grid is interrupted and when the impression of infinity is challenged. Thousands of subordinate façades were built prior to the mid-20th century exclaiming fronts, backs, and faces. As in Ruskin's portrait of nature, those small places exist side by side along pathways as their eyes reach out and look directly at us. Their expressions change from the miniature to the magnificent, from one ethnic domain to another and, most dramatically, they glance into precincts between their personal intimacy and the public activity of the street. We are the cat and they are the eyes in the bush.

As Ed Casey realizes in his writings on "place,"¹³ the porosities of a boundary embody, rather than foreclose, a condition of two or more spaces on either side. The architecture of a boundary can evoke the contents of contiguous realms which, by impinging together, may be perceived as a singular shared realm, an architectural metamorphose wrought from different states of being. A façade may momentarily fashion new shapes altogether like the glimmering ripples and transient constellations of debris upon a beach between land and sea. Elements of mediation may realize ambivalent dimensions to be visualized in the absolutely frozen forms of architecture. If a transitional realm attempts to express only the content of one of its constituents it would proclaim a border rather than a boundary.

Yet, the prevalent prescription in the late mid-20th century was to discard the imagined and remembered minutia of a façade by prioritizing an ideal expression of continuity, an 'honest' passageway from outside to inside a building (fig. 8). A sparse ideal of physical efficiency was registered in flow patterns of seamless 'circulation' throughout the regions of fundamentally heterogeneous circumstance. Recall how much we constantly witness the dreary 'detail' of continuity in the empty walk-straight-through spaces of entrances sometimes described in the design studio as architectural 'openings'.

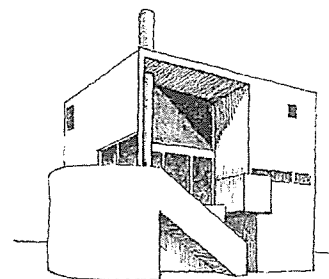


Figure 8:
Gwathmey House, 1965, Amagansett, New York, USA; Charles Gwathmey, architect, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

With greater orchestration, the terrains of continuity and discontinuity can be expressed simultaneously. Casey's discourse on two-ness,¹⁵ as being inherent to the phenomenon of place, suggests incorporating details which express both moving and stopping, the imaginary and the concrete in which extraordinary and ordinary events are "becoming," "colliding," and "disappearing" at once. Designing within the space of 'facing-each-other' suggests allowing a condition of pause, a median moment which may negotiate with the monotony of a continuous unimpeded movement as it stirs up the abundant content delivered to 'being-

in-between' different things. Vital figures may pop-up or be inscribed which illuminate the intricacy of flux. In Casey's words, such two-(or more-)ness would realize the "polyvalent primacy" of place over space.¹⁴

If a materialized vision of two-or-more-ness is to be concretized at once, one supreme location would be within the legible composition of a decorated façade. Such an architectural face would be neither a fiction nor a mask. It would ceremoniously, even theatrically, portray the actual values and expectations of the worlds situated on both sides of a porous boundary.

THE FACE

Many 20th-century schools of architecture not only challenged the 'arbitrary' designing of façade—qua-face from an ideological standpoint, they also avoided the use of that term "façade" in studio criticism. Like "ornament" and "decoration," mention of a "façade" became non-essential while integrated rational frameworks governing "spatial-program," "plan-diagram," and "tectonics" prevailed. Nevertheless, use of the term "façade" has been quietly returning over the past fifteen years, albeit curiously bereft of the original and obvious reasons for being called "façades" in the first place. For example, façades are often indiscriminately regarded as whatever side or elevation of an entire building one is observing in the line of sight. They are seldom referred as discreet or commanding compositions situated ceremoniously upon or around the center of an important entry. Indeed, entire works of architecture often seem to be critiqued as though they are 'sculptures-in-the-round' to be entered through openings.

Does this casual usage indicate that the term has actually lost its primordial identity to become a banal term inherited from a forgotten way of thinking? Or does the use of the term "façade" today indicate a percept based only on the orientation of the observer's face pointing towards a 'face-less' building? If our sense of the lived human body, with its visceral response to sighting another body, has been separated from the way we imagine and experience our design and approach to buildings why don't we just say "appearance" or "elevation" rather than "façade"? Perhaps the clinging to the classic term suggests that the millennial identity may be a burning ember waiting to be reignited.

Two buildings designed in the 1980s by architects rooted in modernism illustrate the absence on the one hand, and the perdurance on the other, of the primordial façade. Richard Meier's High Museum of Art (Fig.9) in Atlanta, Georgia, 1984, presents the main entry as a target appearing as an 'opening' elevated at the end of a long continuous pathway. The elegant masses of the building serve as entourage to the linear approach. In 1981, James Stirling designed the entry to the Arthur M. Sackler Museum (fig.10) at Harvard University with elements of

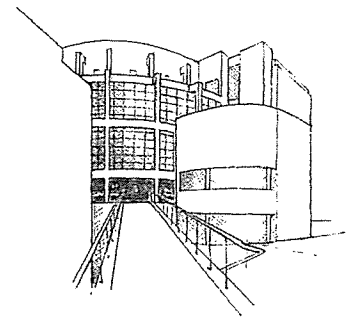


Figure 9:
High Museum of Art, 1984, Atlanta, Georgia, USA; Richard Meier, architect, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

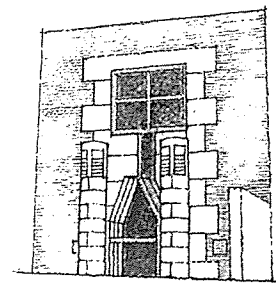


Figure 10:
Arthur M. Sackler Museum, 1981, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA; James Stirling, architect, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

the façade that are more positively figural and mysterious. The doorway is guarded by two cylindrical sentries situated in front of an upright glazed standing figure cut out of the masonry wall. This entrance is not an invitation to dash in, but rather an enigmatic shrine that invites pause and a look upward to a geometric head (a mind) which looks down and over the visitor. There is a compelling tension between invitation and forbiddance.

More recently, two buildings have been awarded international recognition specifically for the design of their "façades." The term is now an official category among a taxonomy of architectural elements specified for recognition. In 2013, Behnisch Architekten designed the entrance to the John and Francis Angelos Law Center (fig. 11), Baltimore University, commonly photographed towards the diagonal, an angle that visually presents the cubic sculptural massing of the architectural sculpture-in-the-round. The building is a balanced composition of textured cubes split apart by a gigantic glazed reveal which works its way from above-right to below-left to an inconspicuous opening near a corner of the base.

In 2014, the Health and Sciences Education Building, (fig. 12), University of Arizona by PTW Architects placed highest in the WAN (World Architecture News) façades category. The front of the building features a horizontal triad of solid animated wall-forms harboring the principal entry located in the center. The centerpiece is a curiously anthropomorphic standing presence housing a stairwell. Indeed, all three massive graphic elements together form a chorus of gesturing bodies, the ones to the right and left protecting the smaller and more vital central figure. While capricious, the architecture of the façade recalls the lively story-telling inclination of its ancestors by very consciously presenting an abstract narrative of postural beings which are theatrical, rather than deferential, to the practical 'openings' into the building. The façade provides actors that reach out, alert, and seem to look around.

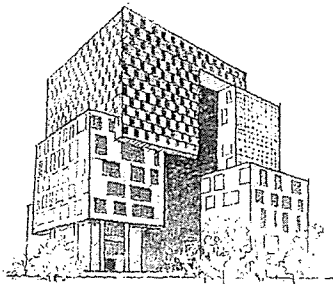


Figure 11:
John and Francis Angelo Law Center, 2013,
University of Baltimore, Maryland, USA; Behnisch
Architekten, drawing by Kent Bloomer.

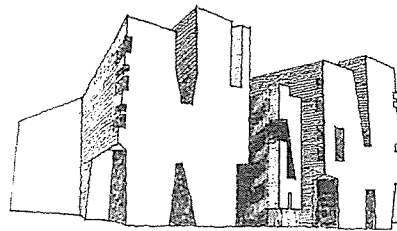


Figure 12:
Health Sciences Education Building, 2014, University of
Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, USA, CO Architects, drawing
by Kent Bloomer.

It is noteworthy that both the Sackler and the HSEC entrances exhibit body and head attributes which imply a corporeal reciprocity, an inter-facing with a visitor. By contrast, the High Museum and the law buildings present efficient opening of entry.

Historically façades added figuration, spaces, and disciplines to those governing the primary design of the basic building. Openings were among the details. Façades, like our faces, were a portion, a discreet physical part of a greater whole. Over the centuries they often appeared as 'microstructures' performing as fantastic works of architecture, albeit works that combined cosmic, public, and private space. They were only partially beholden to the technology or 'time-period' of the building. In the early 20th century 'contemporary' elements on commercial structures chose to parley with a building's age or earlier role, while in the 19th century classical stoops often acted to grace (or antique) the fatigue (the homogeneity) of common construction and 'useful' form. Considering a façade today is to consider a place of encounter where the handmade may dance with the robotic, where the faraway may be connected to the immediate, and where a "contrary expression" may, with decorum and proportion, "appeal to the (public) imagination."

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1 Bloomer and Moore, 1977, page 40.

2 Weiss, 1961, pps. 86-87. "If we make the ornaments or figures inseparable from a building by

hammering them out of a wall, we will introduce a secondary art to supplement a primary one."

- 3 Sullivan, 1896, pps. 103-109. (Sullivan was describing the Wainwright Building in which a "physiological ... circulatory system" of machinery inspired the ornament of the frieze in which ornament per se may be understood as an article of function.)
- 4 Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 1977, orig. 1848, pps. 40-41.
- 5 Isidore of Seville, 2006, orig. ca. 615-630 A.D., page 271.
- 6 *Ibid.*, page 271.
- 7 (Italics are mine) Vitruvius, page 209.
- 8 Jones, page 15.
- 9 Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, page 131.
- 10 *Ibid.*, page 119.
- 11 Scott, 1954, orig. 1914, page 68.
- 12 Jones; *The Grammar of Ornament* includes chapters on Arabian, Turkish, Moorish, Persian, Indian, Hindu, and Chinese ornament.
- 13 Casey and Watkins, pp. 13-108.
- 14 Casey, pp. 336-337.