4/ The possibility of sharing architecture

son
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Opening scene of the film "Marnie"
Alfred Hitchcock - 1964

Stairs and kitchen of Monsieur C's house
Beauchamp, France (95)

*The long gestation of this kitchen/
bathroom has since raised many
questions in my mind. The most
sobering is that this "discourse" of
the tension between skin and body
upon which the architectural project
is articulated does not exist for the
client. She is happy to have a kitchen
and a bathroom with assertive and
carefully thought out forms, to benefit
daily from these little functional
inventions and to have only spent
€15,000 for the restructuring of these
two spaces. Yet, all this thinking and
the mental worlds created within
the object often strike me as purely
fictitious because they do not really
interest her. Am I to have been the
author of a verbose architecture, of
an invisible and therefore perhaps
nonexistent history? This project
was undeniably carried out in real
dialogue with Madame Meziat,
taking into account her expectations
and needs. But the laying out of the
materials and the orientation of the
choices seem to exist in my eyes
only. But is this not always the case?
Might there not be a fundamental
misunderstanding in architecture?
Are we really speaking of the same
thing when, at the completion of a
project, the client and I are happy?
It is often said that a film is a fiction
while architecture is real. But at this
stage of my work, these two worlds
do not seem so distinct.
This question became even more
pressing in the case of the project
for Monsieur C. in the town of
Beauchamp. Monsieur C. owned a
second home that he intended to rent.*

His intentions and concerns were therefore not really his but those of an unknown third party whose hypothetical intentions must not be upset. The projects I faced previously could depend on a subject, a person whose face betrayed adherence or disagreement. How was one to think for several unknown persons at once? Was it a matter of relying on "systems", order, the common denominator and proven solutions that are known to satisfy everyone? Perhaps one must accept the fictional dimension of architecture. Don't novels and movies transport people in their millions? Godard says that cinema is the last form of public transport. Is architecture a means of transport? Is it possible to think of a living place as a film?

When I travel from Beauchamp to Aubervilliers and the meandering route of the RER C takes me through the territories of Gennevilliers, Epinay-sur-Seine, Saint Gratien and so on, it is fictions that come to mind. Série Noire by Alain Corneau, in which the house looks exactly like Monsieur C.'s. Other people will see different stories, will find different landmarks on their journeys. We do not have the time to understand most of the territories we experience. Do we not see in them only that which we think we will find? How do we ensure that an architectural experience can be shared? Work on this project is still in its early stages. The working hypothesis we chose was to explore ways of arousing mixed emotions. Alfred Hitchcock's films were a starting point. Everyone feels and trembles with their own "suspense". Every viewer is gripped by the vertigo in the stairwell of Vertigo or the elusive depth of the opening shot of Marnie.
Paradoxically, it is as if the real were too undetermined for us to share understanding of it, and that fiction allowed us to agree on the basis of a look, a way of seeing and understanding the world, of making it legible from a certain point of view. Bataille told us that architecture ensured the stability of the world; could fiction be understood as ensuring its instability?
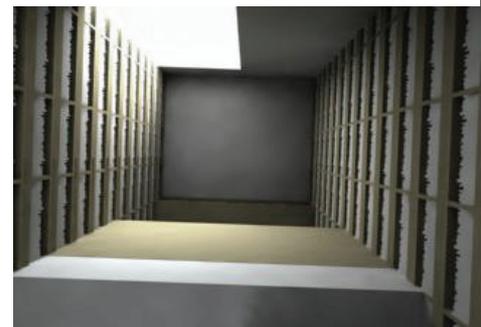
Diving perspective of the stairwell in "Vertigo"
Alfred Hitchcock - 1958

Could an architecture construct itself fictionally all the while being physically present in the real world? In following Hitchcock, the space to be created would be like a concatenation of great scenes from the history of cinema. One could construct an experience in reference to a common culture with a resident who does not know architecture but who has most likely seen Hitchcock. The entrance would open into a steep staircase. A fine and deep extension would provide a space similar to the shot from Marnie. The staircase, a central theme in Hitchcock's work, could convey the dramaturgy of the one that appears in Shadow of a Doubt. The entire house and garden could create this sense of disquieting and soothing withdrawal from the violence of the city that runs through Hitchcock's films (Shadow of a Doubt, Strangers on a Train, Psycho, etc.). Godard believes that "cinema creates memory". This project builds on the memory of cinema in order to attempt turning architecture into another type of public transport.

3D section cut of the stairwell - Projected state
Beauchamp, France (95)