

Architecture
as an
Instruction
-Based
Art

8.26-10.14

2024



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE
SCHOOL

OF
DESIGN

Architecture as an Instruction-Based Art

Curated by Farshid Moussavi

Druker Design Gallery
8.26-10.14, 2024

Harvard University Graduate School of Design

The architecture of a building is a product of assemblage, or the way physical elements—forms, materials, textures, colors—are combined to create enclosed and open spaces that have a distinctive presence. In the process of combining these elements, the architect must also address a range of separate and often irreconcilable challenges and constraints, such as security needs, rights of light, sustainability engineering, and regulations for fire, health, and safety. Such constraints are an essential part of designing a building that will exist in a place and time and impact humans and nature. By defining priorities and making choices regarding what is fixed or moveable, traversable or impassable, audible or inaudible, visible or invisible, touchable or untouchable, closed or open, transparent or opaque, and the colors, geometries, and structures that are present, architects are capable of generating unpredictable assemblages that define people's everyday experience in unique ways.

Unlike the painter or the sculptor, the architect's final act results not in a completed work of art but in a set of instructions that enable the intended assemblage to be realized. In this sense, an architect's work is closer to that of a conceptual artist. The architect's instructions, which incorporate the input of engineers and numerous other experts, are recorded by a team of collaborators. These instructions are then implemented on a site that is usually exposed to the elements and the dynamics of time, often several years, as specialist builders, roofers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and

decorators complete the building. Meanwhile, however, architects remain both legally and morally accountable for what follows from their instructions.

Today, architectural instructions appear as different layers of a complex, computer-aided design drawing, which can be described as a construction coordination drawing. Such drawings bring together the elements of a building that are visual and non-visual, physical and non-physical: pipes, studs, and conduits are indicated along with doors, windows, and stairs, as well as components related to lighting, sound, and heating. Architects produce construction coordination drawings to determine how a building should coalesce as a whole, while using them as point of reference when communicating with engineers and other consultants that they work with during the design process.

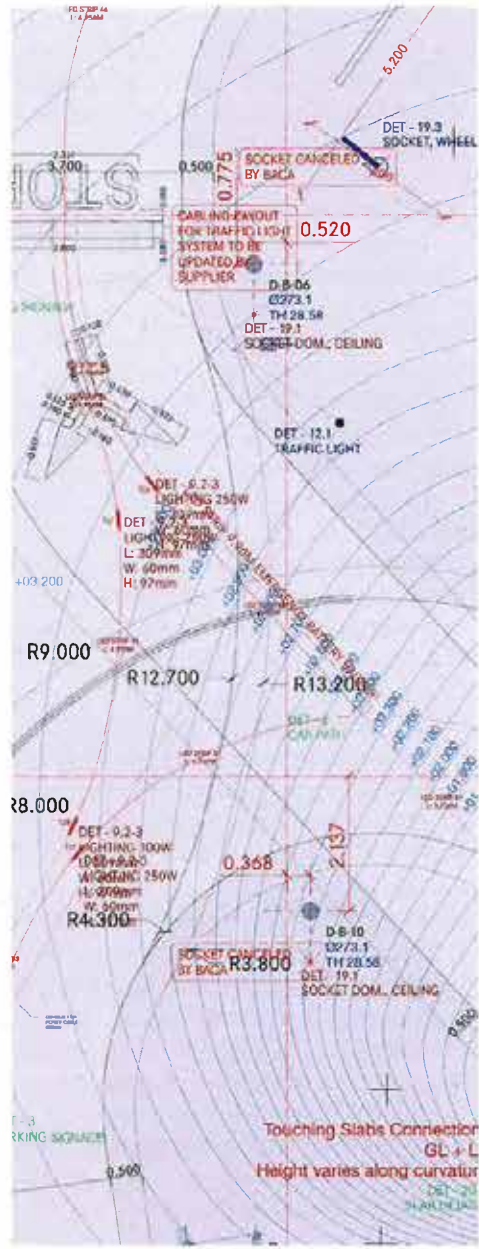
Construction coordination drawings are different from the sketches, perspectives, diagrams, maquettes, and other images that architects use to convey their ideas for a particular building to its patrons and users. They are also different from straightforward construction drawings that are extracted from the construction coordination drawings, with each drawing conveying a partial description of the building to the contractor or a subcontractor. Therefore, for architects, construction coordination drawings are not an aid to presentation or representation, but rather a tool—a way of working things out. They are the drawings that enable the architect to make decisions regarding the part each element will play, not only in the underlying anatomy of a building, but in the way it is experienced.

Firms

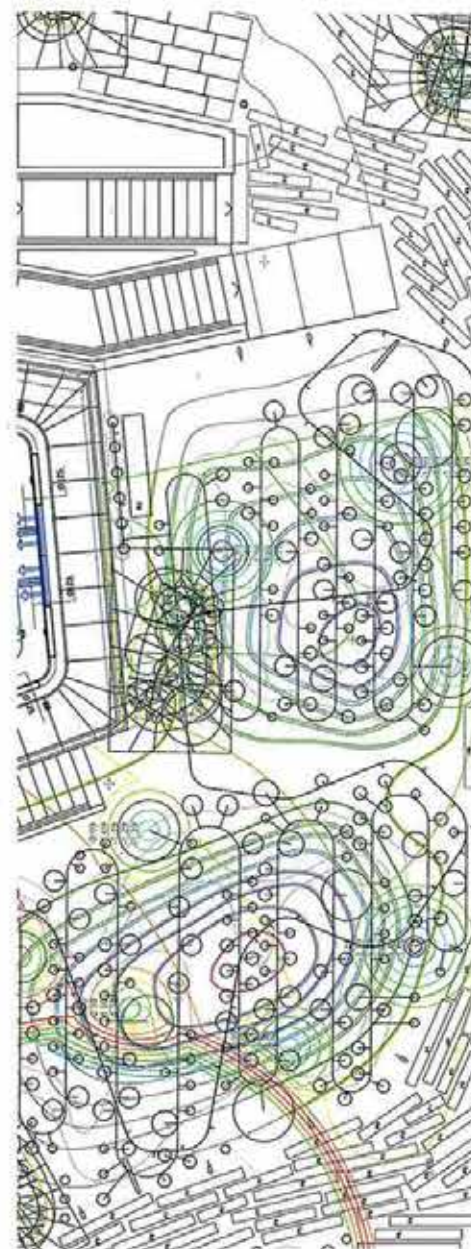
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 6a architects
 Ábalos+Sentkiewicz AS+
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 Allford Hall Monaghan Morris
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 Architecture Research Office
 ARTEC Architekten
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 Dorte Mandrup
 Farshid Moussavi Architecture
 Foster + Partners
 French 2D
 LA DALLMAN
 Meinhard von Gerkan and Stephan Schütz with Christian Hellmund / gmp · von Gerkan, Marg and Partners Architects
 Grimshaw
 Herzog & de Meuron
 Hopkins Architects
 Höweler + Yoon Architecture
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 Johnston Marklee
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 Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects
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 WALLMAKERS
 WORKac
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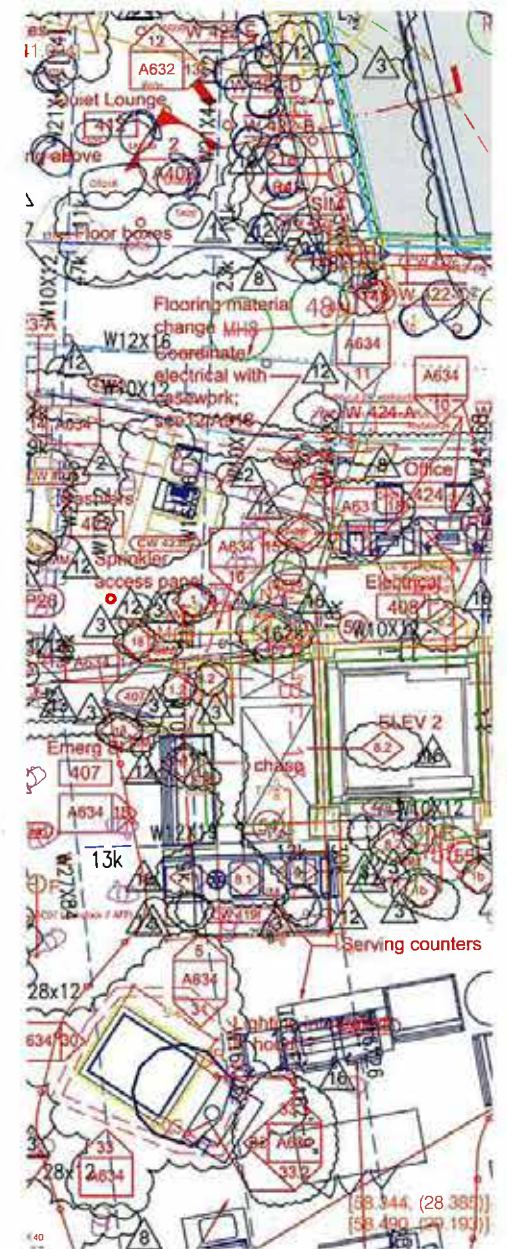
Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects.
National Taichung Theater (detail), 2016.
Taichung, Taiwan R.O.C



Christian Kerez. Car parks for the Pearl Path (detail), 2017-2023. Muharraq, Bahrain



amid.cero9 (Cristina Díaz Moreno & Efrén García Grinda). Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Fundación Francisco Giner de los Ríos) (detail), 2004-2014. Madrid, Spain



Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects. Wellesley College - Lulu Chow Wang Campus Center (detail), 2005. Wellesley, Massachusetts

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This exhibition is an expanded version of a show I curated for the architecture room at the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 2017. I revisited the concept in response to an invitation from Elizabeth Christoforetti and Jacob Reidel – both assistant professors in practice of architecture at the GSD and guest editors of *Harvard Design Magazine* 52 – to include extracts of the exhibition as part of the upcoming issue of the magazine, which takes “Instruments of Service” as its theme. I am grateful to have the opportunity to include more practices and further explore this project in the Druker Design Gallery and feature the work of current and past GSD faculty. I want to thank the entire GSD Exhibitions team for their work as well as each participant for generously sharing their work with us.
– Farshid Moussavi