

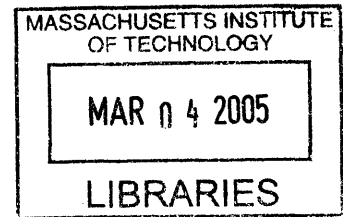
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Reflecting the Instant: Information, Image, Architecture

by

Carl A. Solander

B.A. Architecture
Columbia University, 1999



SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

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MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

A response to the growing importance of designing in an environment that is composed both of physical and non-physical characteristics, this thesis explores a process whereby information is given a visual form through image so that it can be rendered as a site for architectural design. Sited in Times Square, the proposed building responds to the unseen forces of the site, forces which are latent in its physical and visual form, and which are embedded in our experience of the site, but can only be directly grasped in their totality through an armature information.

The project is directed by my interpretation of Henri Bergson's notion of virtuality—that is, a notion of the totality of possibility as something that surrounds the actual, but is accessible to our minds as mere fragments. The initial stage of the project uses this notion to translate information about the physical site into virtual images: images which depict a full range of potentials simultaneously, graphically retaining a rich complexity akin to real experience. Emerging out of this process, the proposed building is a mechanism for visualizing virtual characteristics of Times Square in the form of image.

Thesis Supervisor: Mark Goulthorpe
Title: Associate Professor of Architectural Design

Table of Contents

Preface: On Virtuality 7

Part 1: Defining a Boundary 13

In which different definitions of site are examined

Part 2: Visualizing the Virtual Site 23

A first experiment in translating data into image

Part 3: The Materiality of Image 41

A second experiment in translating data into image

Part 4: The Landscape of Image 59

In which information relating to the site is presented

Part 5: Embodying the Virtual Image 79

In which the architectural proposal is presented

Conclusions 121

Bibliography 125

Appendix A: Deleuze on Virtuality in Cinema 131

Background research: analysis of two films in light of Deleuze's writings on cinema and time

Appendix B: On Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* 141

Background research: analysis of Debord's film with special attention to the structure of representation

Preface: On Virtuality

Over the last century, architecture has become progressively less exclusive to the realm of the physical. While the ultimate dematerialization of architecture itself seems unlikely, the environment to which architecture responds continues to expand ever more rapidly into the dimension of virtuality. Our conception of the city is shaped by statistical data, its surfaces blanketed in advertising, its territory overlaid by communications networks of staggering complexity, its image reproduced infinitely. As Howard Reingold asserts in his book *Smart Mobs*, the new hybrid urban fabric consists of three elements: bodies, infrastructure, and info-structure (2). Architecture exists in this hybrid condition; it is at the intersection of the different elements of the city. Yet it is evident that architects typically treat the physical site in a much different manner than the virtual site. The physical site becomes a source of poetic inspiration, a locus for empirical study, and a reservoir of formal conditions to be referenced. The virtual site is reduced to technical specifications, engineering diagrams, perhaps a single representative image that demonstrates some basic idea of connectivity. The process of design begins with the definition of a site, but a site's virtual dimension is rarely treated as integral. This thesis explores ways in which the virtual and the physical can be combined into a hybrid site, a site depicted as image. Architecture designed in such sites serves as a portal between the virtual and physical aspects of a place, becoming a point of visibility within a field where one aspect often obscures the other.

With the proliferation of computer-jargon, the term "virtual" has lost much of its philosophical potency. In order to try to reinvigorate the notion of the virtual as a rich territory for design, I examined its conceptual significance, looking especially at the writings of Henri Bergson. The term "virtual" has a history in philosophical discourse that long predates the advent of digital modes of representation. The term is derived from the Latin *virtus*, which means potential or force. This generalized, obtuse meaning has revolved around the foundational concepts of Western philosophy for centuries, implicated in such ideas as *oikos*, *polis*, and *ethos*. More recently, Gilles Deleuze, modeling his construction on the formulation of Henri Bergson, took up the term as essential to a description of time—a position which is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the temporal art of cinema (see Appendix A). For Deleuze, the virtual is the Whole, that is, all potential that has existed and does exist, while the actual is a partial manifestation of the virtual, that which exists in the instant of the present. More specifically, while the actual is always objective in that all of its elements vary in relation to one another; the virtual is subjective in that all of its elements vary in relation to the privileged position of the actual.

"Subjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is, the soul or spirit, the virtual. The actual is always objective, but the virtual is subjective: it was initially the affect, that which we experience in time; then time itself, pure virtuality which divides itself in two as affector and affected, 'the affection of self by self' as definition of time."

-Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 82-83

Bergson associates virtuality with perception and memory. His virtual is similar in spirit to Deleuze's concept of the Whole, but somehow more tangible, more accessible to the human mind. For Bergson, the past is carried into the present as virtuality—we have memory because we are able to access this virtuality in small fragments. Virtuality is embedded in action itself: through action the virtual is made actual, crystallized as a chosen course and carried into the physical world. Virtuality is a product of choice. It stands behind actuality (which, as "objective" physical reality, exists in all its aspects all at once) as a field of possibility, of potential paths for action. Virtuality exists through time; it is the succession of moments through which change occurs, in which possibility emerges.

"The qualitative heterogeneity of our successive perceptions of the universe results from the fact that each, in itself, extends over a certain depth of duration and that memory condenses in each an enormous multiplicity of vibrations which appear to us all at once, although they are successive. If we were only to divide, ideally, this undivided depth of time, to distinguish in it the necessary multiplicity of moments, in a word, to eliminate all memory, we should pass thereby from perception to matter, from the subject to the object. ... Subject and object would unite in an extended perception, the subjective side of perception being the contraction effected by memory, and the objective reality of matter fusing with the multitudinous and successive vibrations into which this perception can be internally broken up. ... Questions relating to subject and object, to their distinction and their union, should be put in terms of time rather than of space."

-Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 70-71

In reference to the digital interface, the term "virtual" has become a synonym for "representational." The "virtual environments" that have interested many designers are nothing more than graphical interfaces which represent space within a two-dimensional medium. However, what the digital-virtual shares with the Bergsonian-virtual is that both are essentially temporal conditions masquerading as spatial. Just as Bergson's virtual can only be accessed through memory, so does the digital-virtual preserve information through time without physical specificity. It is my suggestion that this lack of physicality of the digital-virtual is at fault for necessitating the fallacy of virtual space. For, while the virtuality that is accessed by memory is grounded in the body and finds its limits in the experiences of that body, the virtuality of the digital relies only on a dispersed silicon infrastructure which is generally designed to be invisible. A primary goal of this thesis is therefore to give a body to digital virtuality through architecture. To visualize virtuality through digital media is to realize the temporal nature of the digital.

By definition, the virtual is infinite. When Bergson speaks of the extension of virtuality into action, he describes stages of remove: somewhere in the background lies pure virtuality, the totality of possibility, which becomes fixed in the mind as image, a fragmentary representation of this totality, which finally evolves into action.

“The progress by which the virtual image realizes itself is nothing else than the series of stages by which this image gradually obtains from the body useful actions or useful attitudes. The stimulation of the so-called sensory centers is the last of these stages: it is the prelude to a motor reaction, the beginning of an action in space. In other words, the virtual image evolves toward the virtual sensation and the virtual sensation toward real movement: this movement, in realizing itself, realizes both the sensation of which it might have been the natural continuation and the image which has tried to embody itself in the sensation.”

-Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 131

The virtual image is the boundary condition that separates the infinitude of pure virtuality from the particularity of action. It is an image of potential that has become specified in that it is linked to an impending action. It is virtuality in context.

For the purpose of formulating a design process, I took this notion of the virtual image as foundational. I could enter into virtuality through a specific context, a set of conditions which could be exploited to produce a field of potential. Working backwards from the actual conditions of the site, I could produce a virtual image by creating a description of the site that remains open to possibility, to any number of particular permutations. In this context, information acts as the source of the virtual image. For, although information about a site is drawn out of the specific conditions of that site, any number of different sites can be drawn back out of that information. The site becomes the instance produced by the generative code of its information. In my design process, the endless permutations possible within a given set of information become a stand-in for Bergson’s virtual image — the infinite possibility focused on the specificity of a nascent action.

Through this process of generating virtual images out of descriptive site information, the virtual and physical aspects of the site are brought together onto the same plane: the plane of the image. The unseen networks which slice silently through a site become visualized as a pattern, but this pattern cannot be divorced from the physical aspects of the site that anchor these networks. It is a process in which the very notion of dimensionality becomes flexible. The three-dimensionality of physical space combines with the one-dimensionality of the virtual on the two-dimensional image surface. The dimensionality contained by the image strains beyond planarity, driving the image toward spatiality and temporality. The process is about capturing, as image, all possible permutations of a set of conditions at once. The virtual image seeks to preserve the intricacy, the ineffability, of the unfolding of time.

"The so-called emergence and evolution of form will no longer follow the classical, eidetic pathway determined by the possible and the real. Rather it will follow the dynamic and uncertain processes that characterize the schema that links a virtual component to an actual one. What is most important to understand here is that unlike the previous schema where the 'possible' had no reality (before emerging), here the virtual, though it may yet have no actuality, is nonetheless already fully real. It exists, one might say, as a free difference or singularity, not yet combined with other differences into a complex ensemble or salient form."

-Sanford Kwinter, *Architectures of Time*, 8

Part 1: Defining a Boundary

Information about a site is a key tool for architects and planners. Often, the initial stage of a design project involves gathering statistical data about a site. This data, which can encompass physical, social, and economic characteristics of a place, is both a means of understanding a site as it exists and a filter through which the site is developed. As such, the form given to the data which describes a site would seem to have as much impact on its physical configuration as does the mode of occupation that characterizes it experientially. The data is inseparable from the site—it is as real and immediate as the physical place itself. Since those who develop a site approach that site as much through its statistical reality as through its physical reality, the designer must learn to treat the statistics themselves as a virtual site.

To begin the project, I immersed myself in data about Times Square., a site which has been the intense focus of study for commercial and governmental organizations for many years. Knowing that I wanted to propose a building for the very heart of Times Square, I needed to understand how these various organizations define the region around it. Aside from the “natural” boundaries that one may notice while walking the site, Times Square has a number of invisible boundaries which determine how it is studied, and are ultimately extremely influential in determining the trajectory of its physical development.

The following pages show the boundaries of the site as determined by three different organizations. First is the Community District boundary used by the New York City Department of City Planning. Second is the Census Tract used by the U.S. Census Bureau. Third is the Business Improvement District (BID) used by the Times Square Alliance. Each of these different divisions of urban space presents a unique statistical picture.

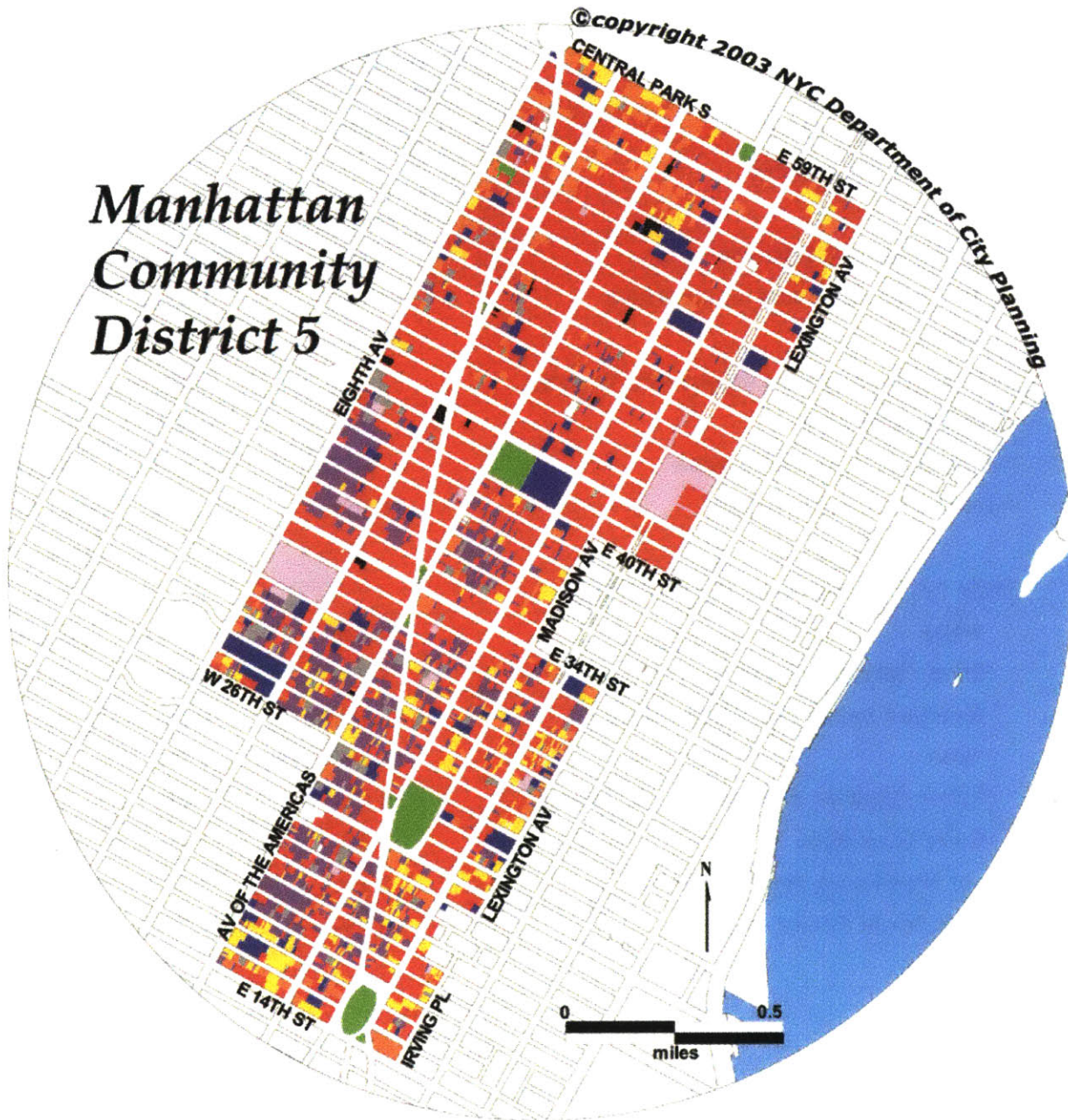
The Department of City Planning divides Manhattan into 12 community districts, areas which are large enough to contain a significant mix of land uses. These districts are perhaps useful for informing broader planning initiatives in the city and studying demographic shifts at a large scale. Yet their size also means that the district data does not clearly reveal the specific character of the smaller neighborhoods of which it is composed.

The U.S. Census Bureau divides Manhattan into over 300 census tracts. The information collected about these relatively small areas is incredibly precise, often ludicrously so¹. The census division would seem to favor a geographical uniformity, paving over regions with vastly different population densities with a more or less uniform pattern. (Within Community District 5, for example, in the 2000 census, tract 0094 had a population of 51 while tract 0072 had a population of 8,111.) Thus, the census divisions are somewhat arbitrary, or at least are determined according to a logic that operates independently of their statistical content.

The Times Square Alliance is a not-for-profit organization that promotes business and tourism in the Times Square neighborhood. Since this organization is unique to the neighborhood, and its concerns are highly specific, the boundaries that it draws directly reflect the institutional character of the area. These boundaries are perhaps the most biased because they intentionally include and exclude specific sites within the neighborhood.

Department of City Planning Community District Map: Land Use

Source: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neighbor/neighbor.html> (10/04)



- Residential Land Uses**
- 1 & 2 Family Residential
 - Multi-Family
 - Mixed Residential & Commercial


Non-Residential Land Uses

- Commercial & Office
- Industrial & Manufacturing
- Transportation & Utility
- Public Facilities & Institutions
- Open Space & Outdoor Recreation
- Parking Facilities
- Vacant Land
- All Others or No Data

Base Map: COGIS Tax Lot File Release 02B, clipped to shoreline
 Land Use: NYC Department of Finance's Real Property File
 (August 2002) modified by the Department of City Planning for
 display of condominiums and parks in appropriate land use category.

Department of City Planning Community District 5 Demographic Profile

Source: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neighbor/neighbor.html> (10/04)

Demographic	Socio-Economic	Age	Income in 1999	Labor	Education	Housing Characteristics	Housing Costs
Demographic Profile					Community District	Manhattan 	New York City
Total Population					44,028	1,537,195	8,008,278
Single Race, Nonhispanic:							
White					31,813	703,873	2,801,267
Black / African American					1,948	234,698	1,962,154
American Indian and Alaska Native					52	2,465	17,321
Asian					6,104	143,291	780,229
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander					39	572	2,829
Some other Race					141	5,536	58,775
Two or More Races, Nonhispanic					967	28,944	225,149
Hispanic Origin (of any race)					2,964	417,816	2,160,554
Single Race, Nonhispanic: (by percentage)							
White					72.3%	45.8%	35.0%
Black / African American					4.4%	15.3%	24.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native					0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Asian					13.9%	9.3%	9.7%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander					0.1%	0%	0.0%
Some other Race					0.3%	0.4%	0.7%
Two or More Races, Nonhispanic					2.2%	1.9%	2.8%
Hispanic Origin (of any race)					6.7%	27.2%	27.0%

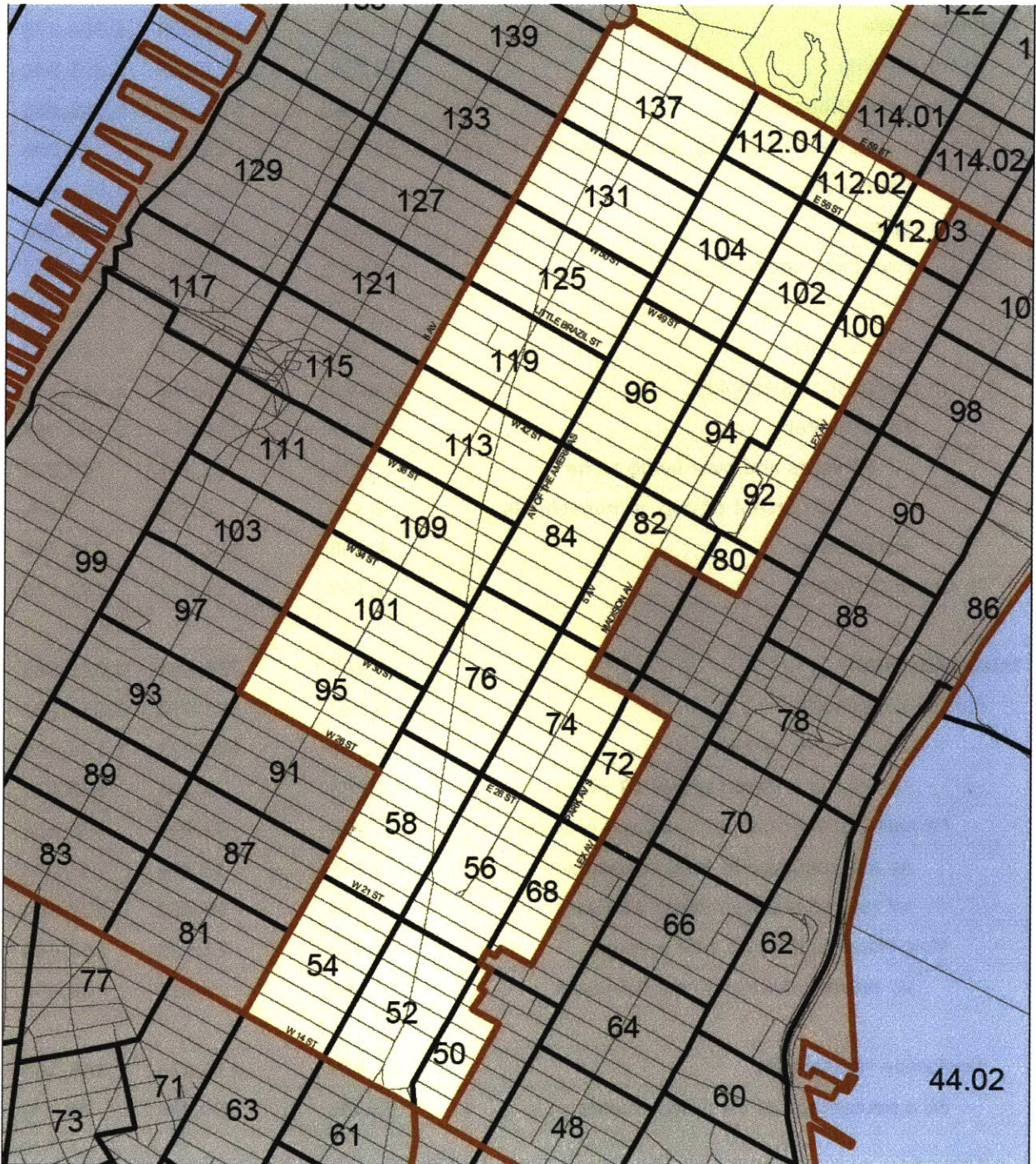
Department of City Planning Community District 5 Demographic Profile

Total Population	44,028	1,537,195	8,008,278
In Households	39,859	1,477,358	7,825,848
In Family Households	15,760	938,532	6,385,685
As percent of pop. in households	39.5%	63.5%	81.6%
Householder	6,392	301,970	1,853,223
Spouse	5,220	186,023	1,124,305
Own child under 18 years	2,328	214,063	1,642,612
Other Relatives	1,500	201,459	1,536,428
Nonrelatives	320	35,017	229,117
In nonfamily households	24,099	538,826	1,440,163
Householder	19,413	436,674	1,168,365
65 years and over living alone	2,533	80,856	299,920
As percent of pop. in households	6.4%	5.5%	3.8%
Nonrelatives	4,686	102,152	271,798
In Group Quarters	4,169	59,837	182,430
Total Households	25,805	738,644	3,021,588
Family Households	6,392	301,970	1,853,233
Married-Couple Family	5,220	186,023	1,124,305
w/ related children under 18 years	1,288	75,141	566,421
Female Householder, no husband present	759	92,994	576,354
As a percentage of total households	2.9%	12.6%	19.1%
w/ related children under 18 years	324	58,662	377,304
Male Householder, no wife present	413	22,953	152,564
w/ related children under 18 years	98	9,497	68,450
Nonfamily Households	19,413	436,674	1,168,365
As a percentage of total households	75.2%	59.1%	38.7%
Households w/ persons 65 years and over	3,826	150,464	712,581
As a percentage of total households	14.8%	20.4%	23.6%

Source: 2000 Census Summary File 1
Population Division - New York City Department of City Planning

U.S. Census Bureau Census Tracts, Community District 5

Source: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neighbor/neigh.html> (10/04)



Census Data for Tracts 119 and 125

Compiled by New York City Department of City Planning

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

	Census Tract 119	Census Tract 125
Total Population 1990	2,005	968
Total Population 2000	1,405	1,762
Population Change 1990-2000 (Number)	-600	794
Population Change 1990-2000 (Percent)	-29	82
White (nonhispanic)	761	1,023
Black / African American (nonhispanic)	287	101
Asian (nonhispanic)	98	354
Other (nonhispanic)	15	26
Two or More Races (nonhispanic)	58	44
Hispanic Origin (any race)	186	214
Total Households	1,070	1,116
Total Family Households	58	293
Total Non-Family Households	1012	823
Average Household Size	1.18	1.52
Average Family Size	2.43	2.3
% under 18	2.1	4.6
% 18 to 64	78.9	88.6
% 65 and over	19.1	6.8
% Foreign Born	15.1	38.0
Median Household Income	\$12,173	\$76,099
% Persons Below Poverty	42.1	9.1
% Families Below Poverty	9.3	3.9
Population 25+	1,295	1,491
% High School Graduates or Higher	73.4	95.9
% College Graduates or Higher	32.4	71.7
Population 16+	1,392	1,681
Number of Persons 16+ in Labor Force	781	1,232
% of Labor Force Unemployed	20.0	3.2
% of Labor Force Female	49.9	33.8
% of Labor Force Male	50.1	66.2

Times Square Alliance: Statistics Describing the Business Improvement District

Source: <http://www.timessquarebid.org/> (10/04)

- 399 Property Owners (not including residential condominiums).
- Approximately 1,500 businesses and organizations including Viacom/MTV, Morgan Stanley, The Equitable, Ogilvy & Mather, The Shubert Organization, Actors Equity, BMG Entertainment & The New York Times.
- 21 million square feet of office space in Times Square; 2.4 million more are under construction.
- Approximately \$3-4 billion in recent private investment in the Times Square neighborhood, including 42nd Street.
- Approximately \$3-4 billion in recent private investment in the Times Square neighborhood, including 42nd Street.
- 12,500 hotel rooms, one-fifth of all New York City hotel rooms, with 3,000 more rooms planned for the area.
- Approximately 26 million annual tourists with 3.9 million overnight stays in local hotels annually. Visitors are assisted at the Alliance's Information Center, the city's first-ever multi-service tourist center.
- 40 theaters including all 22 landmark Broadway theatres.
- 11.5 million Broadway tickets sold in the 1997-1998 season -- the largest audience in 17 years.
- The TKTS Booth for same-day discount theater tickets, selling more than 1.5 million tickets per year.
- More than 251 restaurants from fast food to elegant, calamari to cous-cous.
- 10 cinemas with almost 40 new screens.
- Approximately 50 supersigns including the NBC Astrovision by Panasonic, the famous Dow Jones "Zipper" and the Budweiser sign on One Times Square, the Morgan Stanley ticker sign and the signature Coca-Cola sign on Two Times Square.
- Approximately 27,000 residents in the greater Times Square area.
- Approximately 231,000 employees.
- Approximately 1,500,000 daily passers-by including 344,000 riders in or out of the Times Square subway station and 185,000 commuters from the Port Authority Bus Terminal. Annually, 53,000,000 people enter Times Square's subway stations.
- 500,000 people come to Times Square on New Year's Eve. 500 million more watch the festivities on television worldwide.
- Two police precincts, one NYPD 24-hour substation and one fire station.

Part 2: Visualizing the Virtual Site

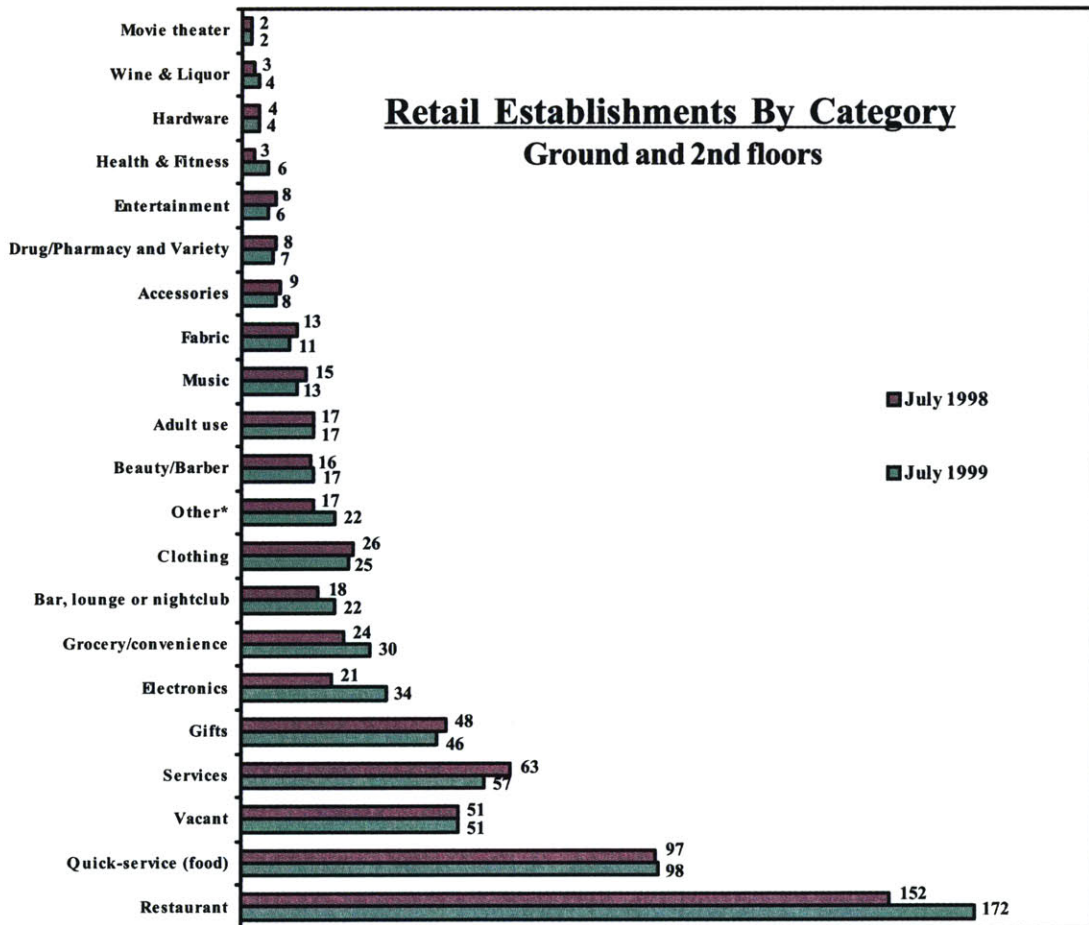
After examining the various ways of delineating the site I decided to work within the region defined by census tracts 119 and 125. These two regions are of equal size, and bracket the central “bowtie” of Times Square in a way that seems logical according to the layout of the streets. The census tracts in this part of Manhattan follow the street grid in 8-block units. This rigid, rectilinear boundary contrasts with the irregularity in the street grid created by the diagonal of Broadway, the defining geographic feature of Times Square. Furthermore, since tracts 119 and 125 are roughly within the Times Square BID, this site would allow the use of statistics both from the U.S. Census, which relate to the local population, and from the Times Square Alliance, which relate more to area businesses and the tourist population.

The precise site which plays host to the final building design is at the center of this area, marked in red below. The physical character of the site will be revealed later, but first its virtuality, its existence as information, will be examined.



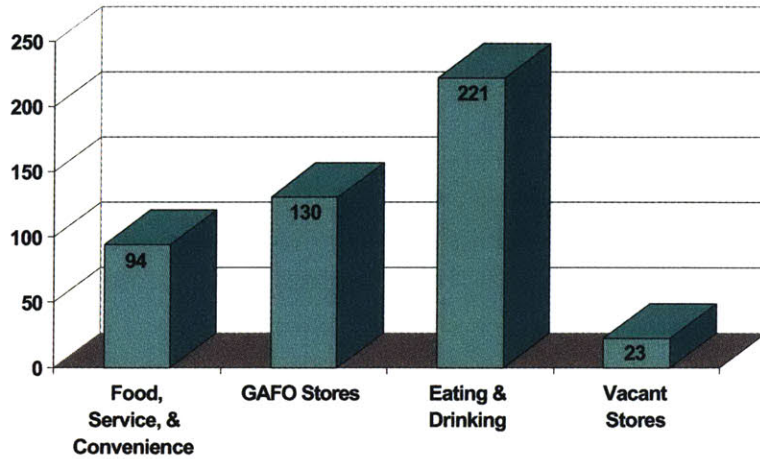
Since the area around Times Square is largely commercial and has a relatively small resident population for a sixteen-block area of Manhattan, the first visualization I developed focuses on the businesses and institutions of the neighborhood. Specifically, I sought to visualize all of the institutions of Times Square as a network of affiliations—an image of choice, the full range of potential that exists behind the actual options that are apparent in one’s experience of the site.

The Times Square Alliance keeps detailed records of the businesses that exist in the area along with statistical data describing the economic and social characteristics of the business environment. Following are a few examples of this seemingly basic information.

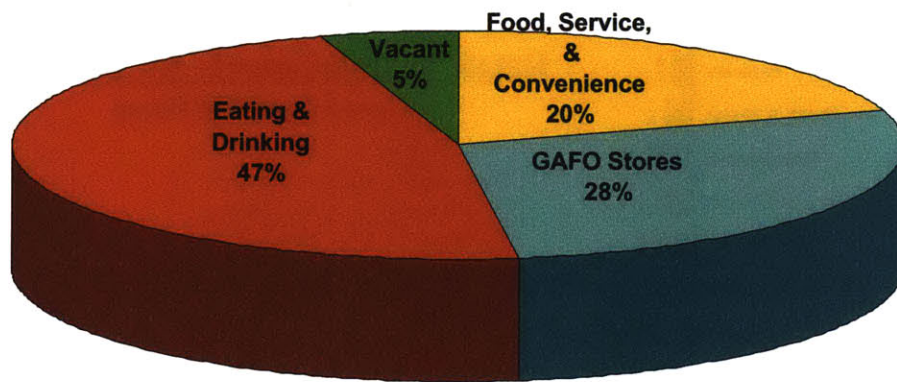


*Other includes misc. retail, jewelry, stationery, tobacco, candy, retail bakery, unknown

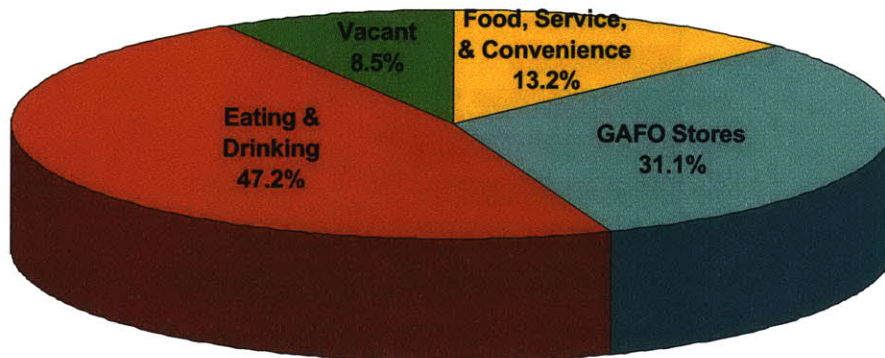
Seventh Avenue/Broadway Retail Inventory 1996



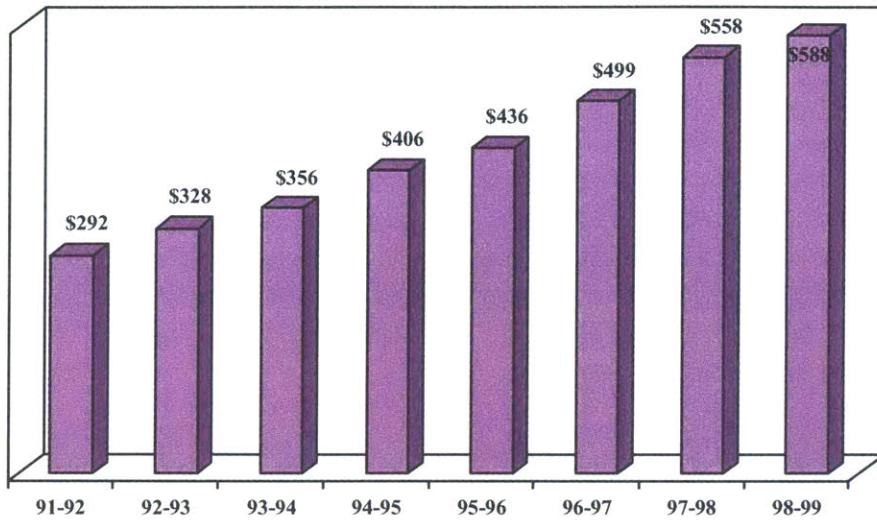
Retail Inventory by Category 1996



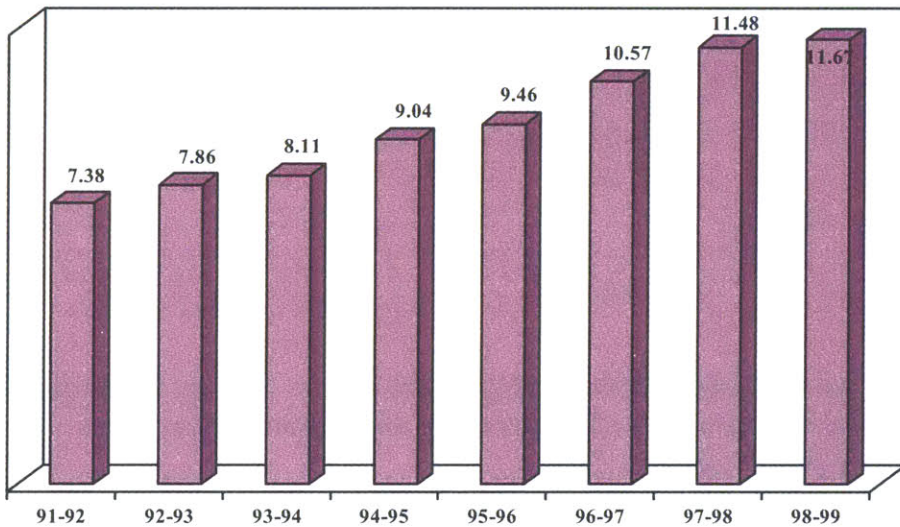
Retail Square Footage 1996



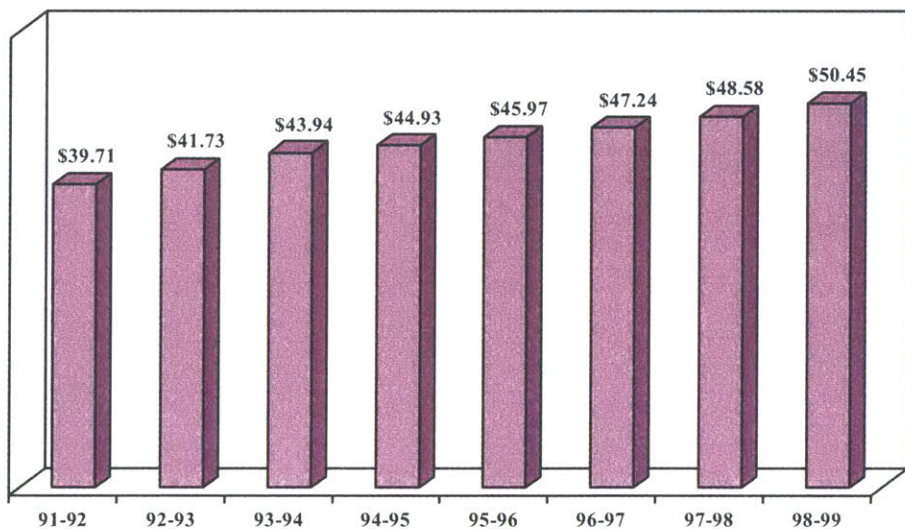
Source: Times Square BID Retail and Market Analysis 1996



Broadway Gross Sales 1992-1999 in millions of dollars



Broadway Attendance 1992-1999 in millions



Average Paid Admission 1992-1999

If one examines this information more closely, it becomes apparent that it is inherently complex—both through its own implications and through the reality that it describes. A simple bar graph conceals its own complexity, reducing the thousands of variations that have been averaged, the anomalous conditions and the enduring conditions, into a single, representative number. Working backwards from the basic figures that produce a bar graph, one discovers the nearly infinite number of possible permutations inherent in simple values; i.e., by taking the average value and the number of inputs that produced that value, one can extrapolate an extraordinary number of potential original values. This is the virtuality of the site-as-information. Extrapolating potential values from numerical averages produces both a mirror of the site's actual complexity and a network of potentiality which describes aspects of the site across time, but not within a particular, given time.

This notion of extrapolating complexity from simple figures is foundational to my thesis. The actual complexity of a site can never be depicted or understood for it flows relentlessly through time. Yet from simple statistical averages, simple enumerations or juxtapositions, an image of potential complexity can be produced from the virtual complexity embedded in the information. This image is perhaps the closest possible vision of a site unfolding in time where everything operates at once in all directions—but it is still a fragmentary vision, covering only one small aspect of a site which is immensely intricate.

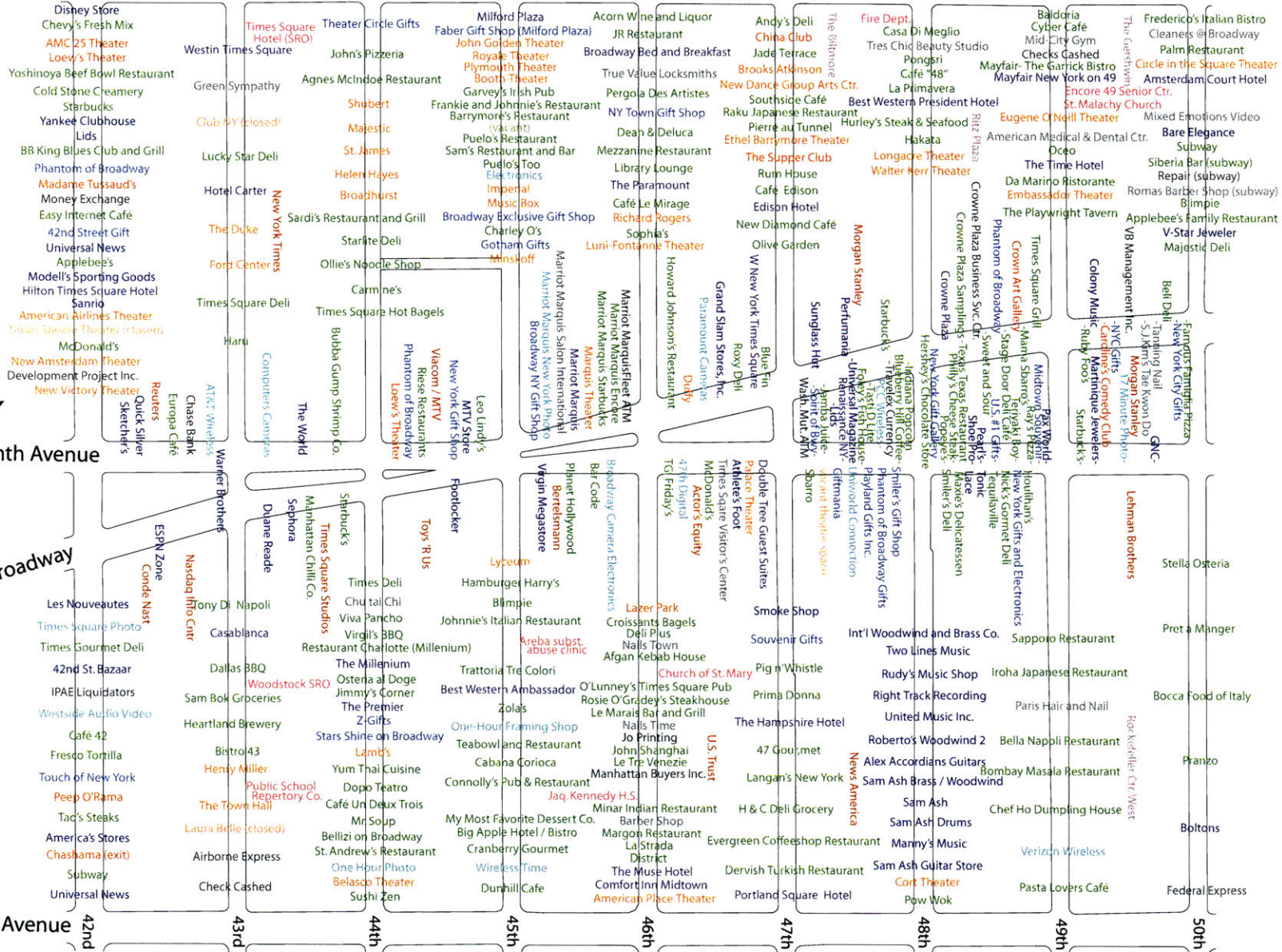
To produce such an image of the institutional landscape of Times Square, I simply took a list of all of the businesses in the neighborhood, located them relationally within a street grid, and categorized them based on programmatic similarity.

Times Square Businesses & Institutions: Color-Coded by Type

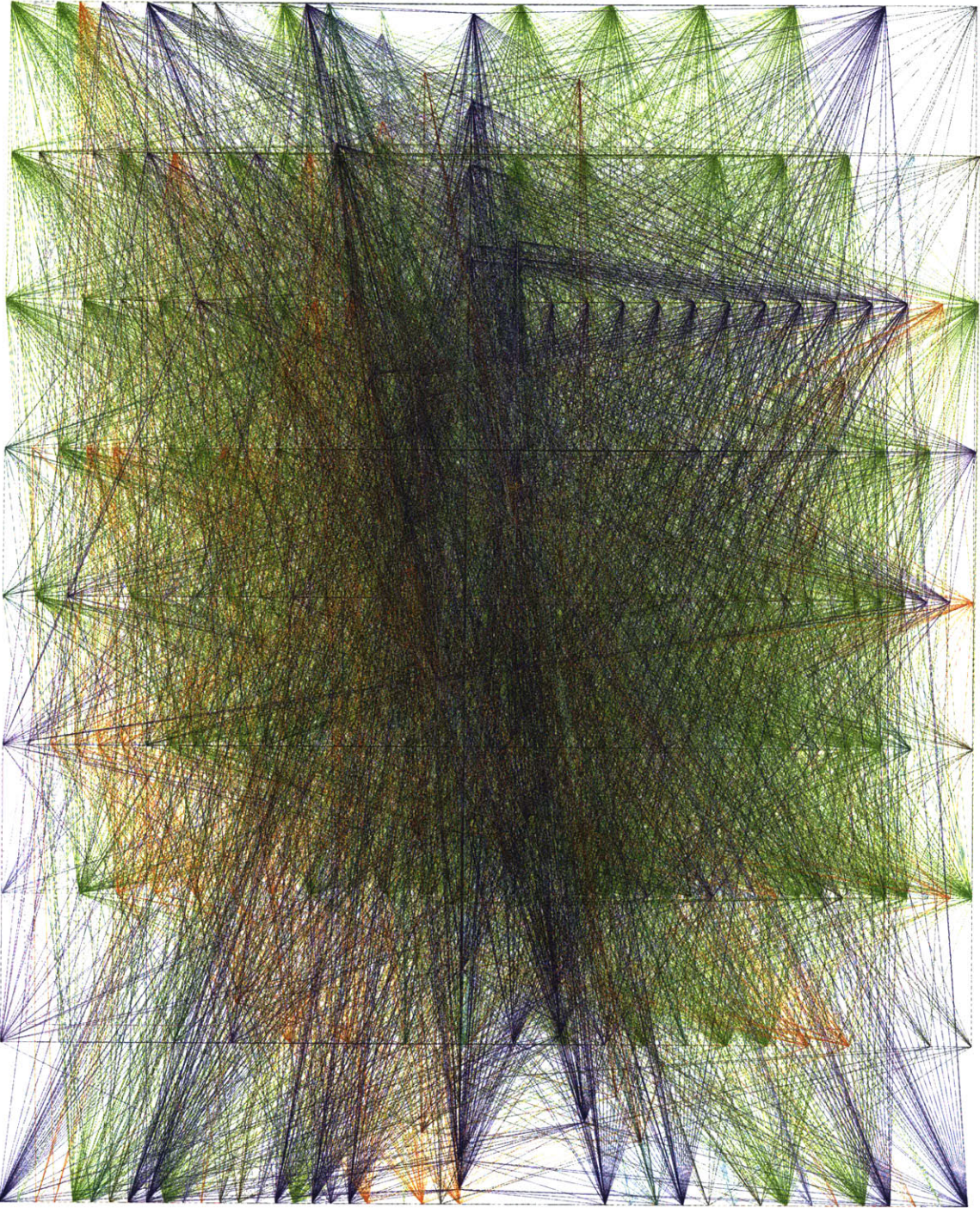
Eighth Avenue

Seventh Avenue

Sixth Avenue

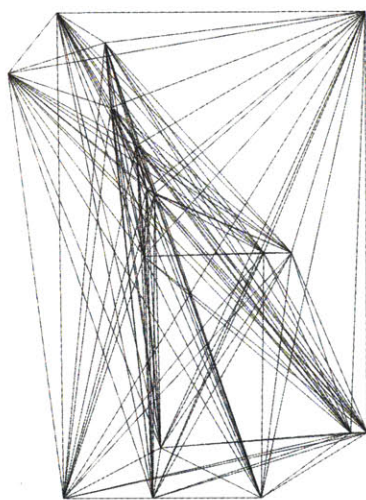


Times Square Businesses & Institutions: Network of Affiliation

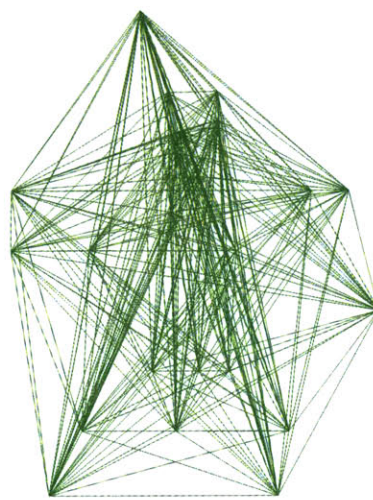


The “Network of Affiliation” is an image that is divorced from the actuality of the site. No direct references to the individual place names or geography of Times Square remain; however, all of the information derived from these attributes is still embedded in the image. There is only a residue of actuality in this virtual image: alignments which leave traces of the street grid and groupings which hint at varying densities of institutional occupation. This image is more index than map. It is produced by maps, but it is no longer legible in the way that a map is. It retains only trace markings of its origins. It becomes a territory in its own right—the territory of image, the virtual site.

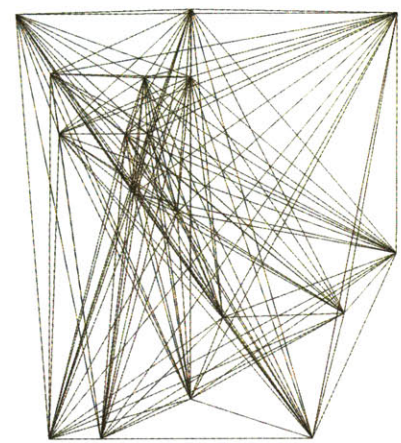
To explore this territory I extracted from the density of the image each of the figures which describes a distinct programmatic affiliation. The spatial overlay of the various programs must be sacrificed in order to distinguish the individual forms of the program networks. (If one accepts that the image of the entire network is a temporal image, than perhaps this separation of figures is analogous to the quantum notion that a particle can never be located precisely in both time and space—that greater specificity in one value necessitates less accuracy in the other.)



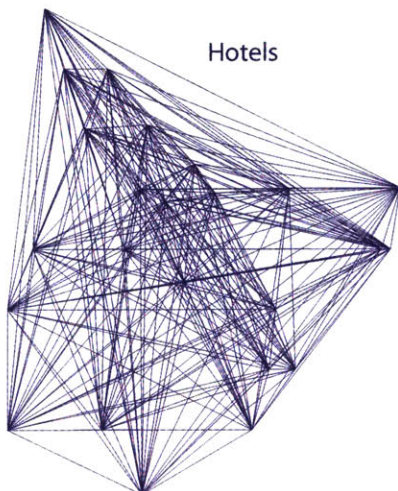
Business Services



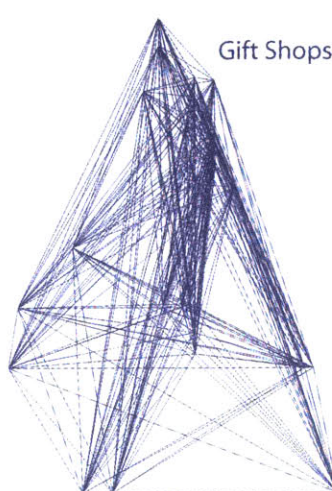
Deli & Grocery



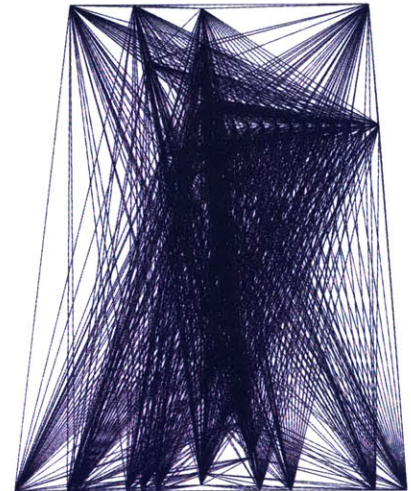
Cafés & Coffee Shops



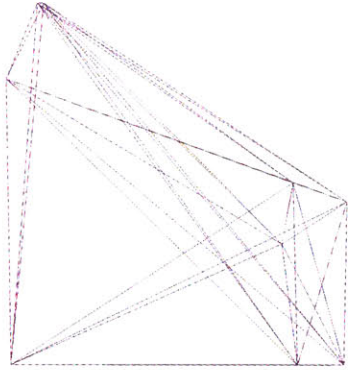
Hotels



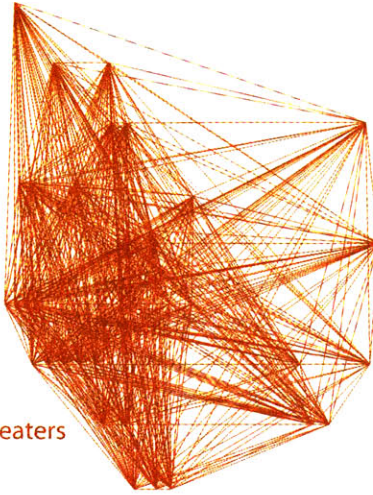
Gift Shops



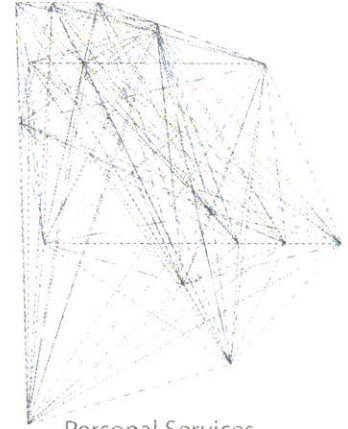
General Retail



Community Facilities

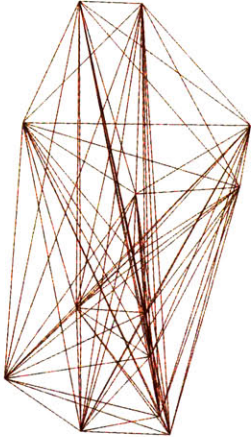


Theaters

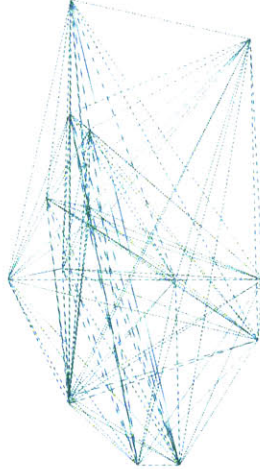


Personal Services

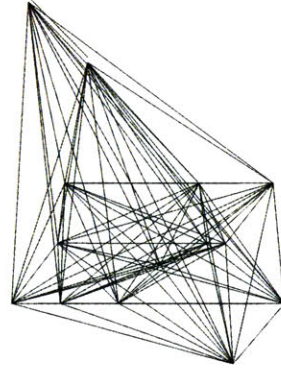
Major Corporations



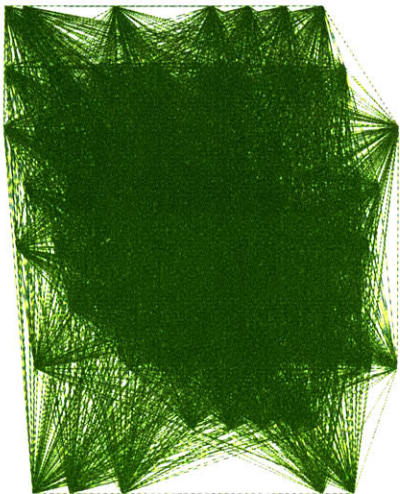
Electronics & Photography



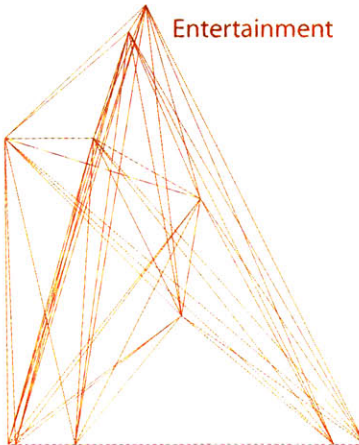
Bars & Pubs



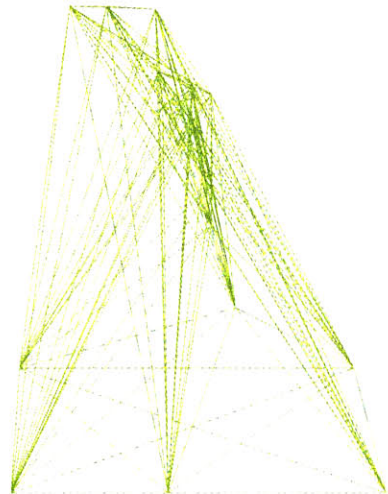
Restaurants



Entertainment

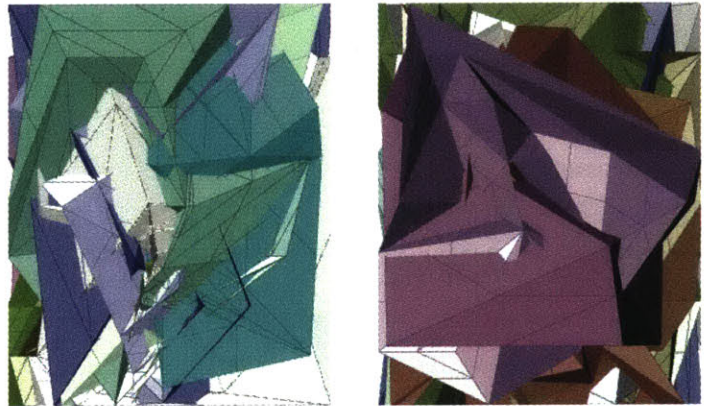


Fast Food

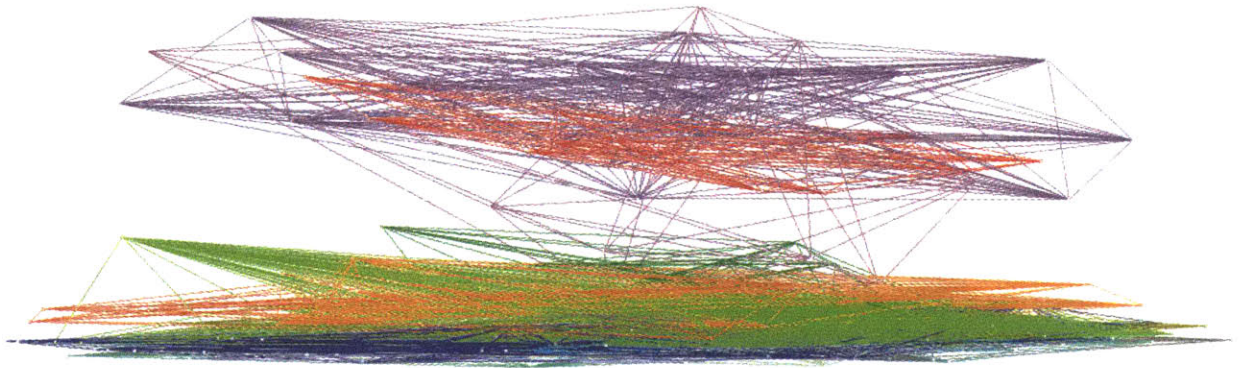


Separating the distinct figures out of the density of the image suggests a latent spatiality: these figures appear to be multi-sided forms projected onto a plane. In order to invigorate the virtual image, to render it as a territory in its own right, as a site for design, the two-dimensional density of lines must be spatialized. I assigned a temporal spectrum to each of the programmatic networks and a specific temporal value within this spectrum to each point in the network. This temporal value is representative of the amount of time a user might spend in the establishment indicated by each point. Thus each distinct program network is translated into a surface that folds in three dimensions. I produced two versions of this temporal field: one using triangulated surfaces and the other using smooth nurbs surfaces. At this point in the process, the representational strategy begins to surpass the specificity of the original site information in defining the design implications of the image.² The information becomes a framework onto which can be grafted any number of distinct formal systems.

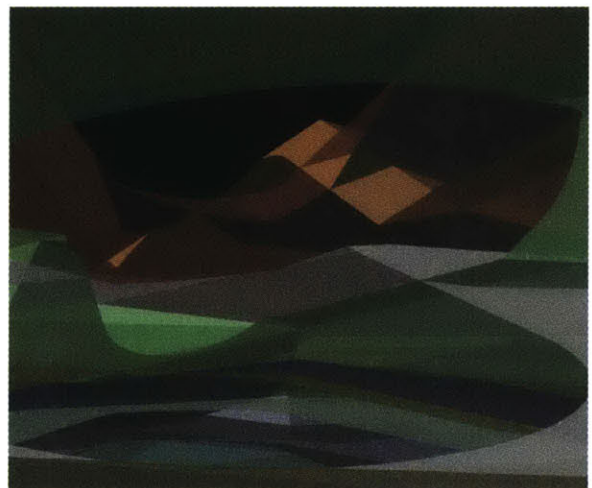
Temporal Field: Base and Top of Model



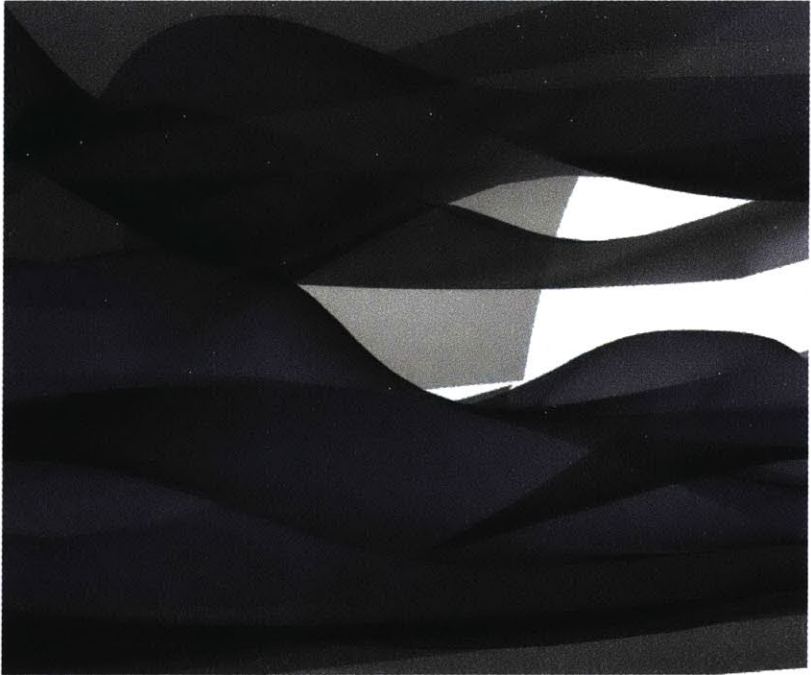
Temporal Field

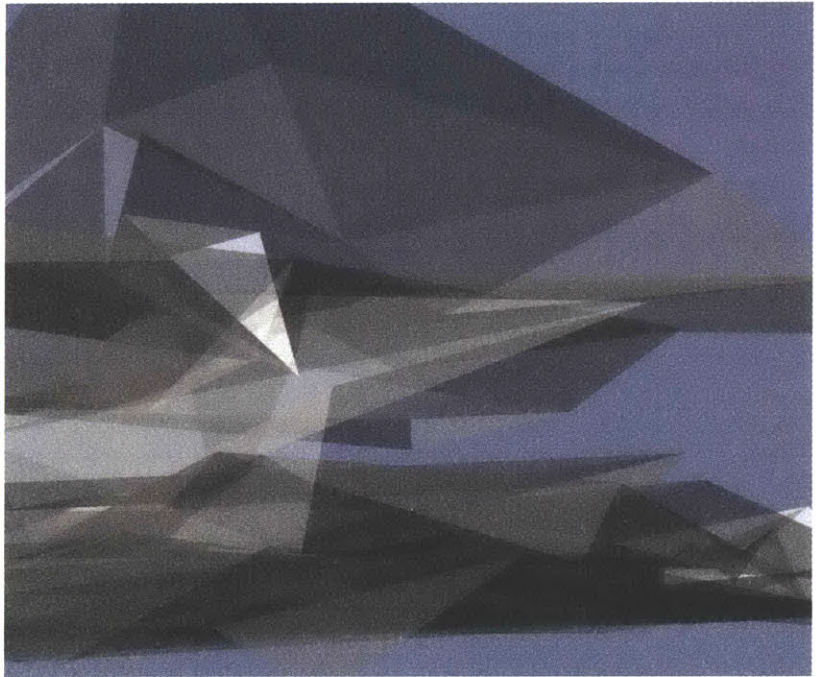


Temporal Section at Region Surrounding Site



Temporal Field Images

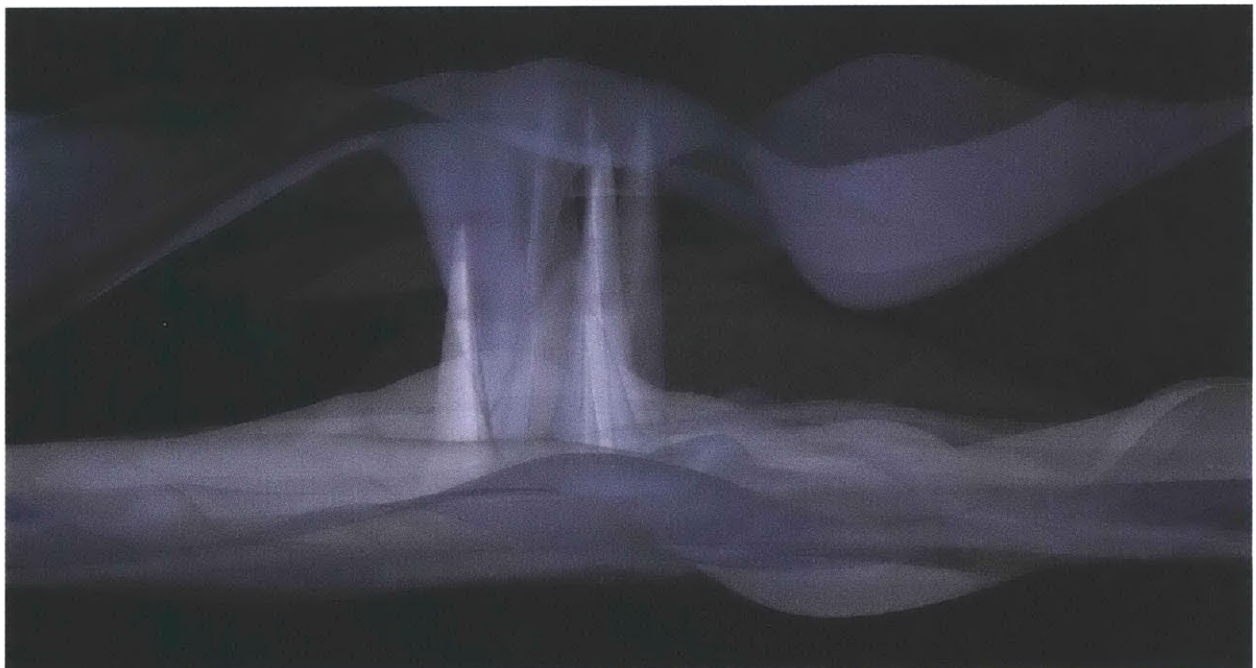




These are not datascares in the manner of MVRDV; they are not architectural projections of statistics that make legible vital urban relationships of quantity, use, growth, expenditure, etc. These datascares condense patterns of data into image; they operate according to the seductive principles of purely formal relationships. They bypass the actual by crystallizing a virtual image. **These images attempt to visualize that which lies behind experience, that which is not visible except in those fleeting moments when a pattern suddenly emerges out of reality and impresses itself on one's consciousness.**

The spatialized data suggests a language of connection. Each variation of this landscape, the triangulated and the smooth, produces a condensation at its center—at the region surrounding the site. These condensations, forms produced within the territory of the image, are preliminary gestures towards design. They are blind attempts to propel a language developed within the realm of the virtual image toward a notion of physicality.

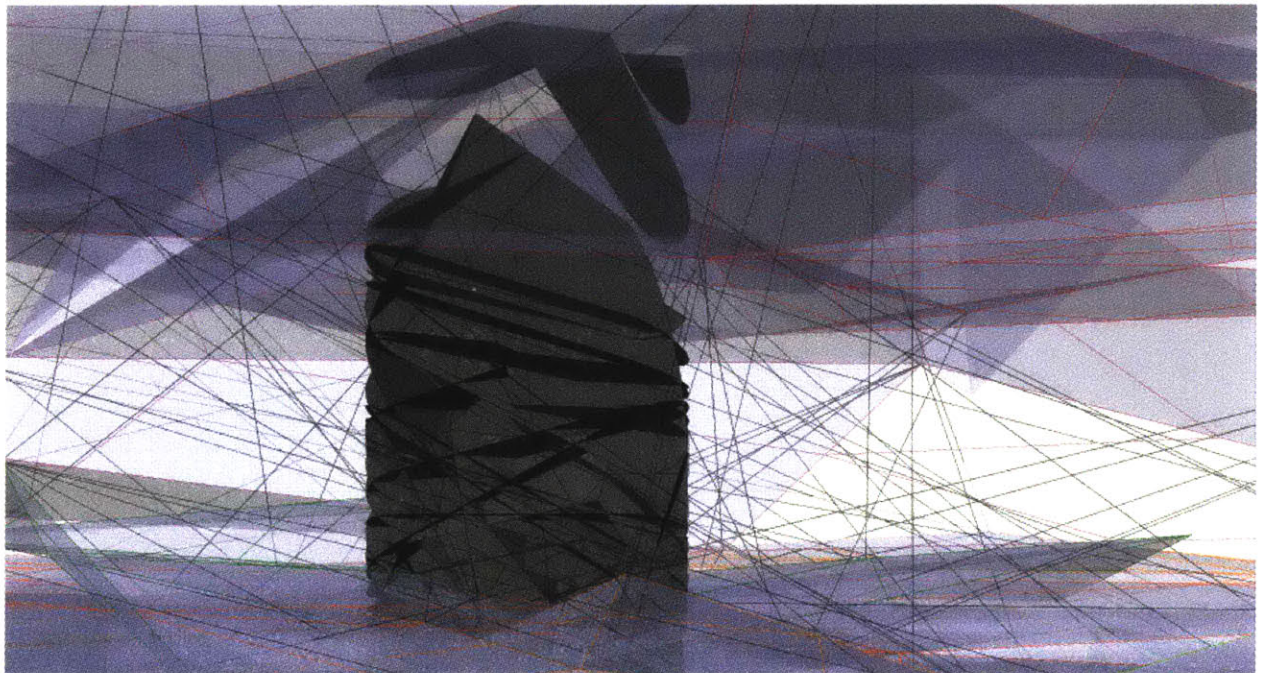
Virtual Condensations of Form



"Things seem to follow their linear truth, their line of truth, but they reach their peak elsewhere, in the cycle of appearances. Things aspire to be straight, like light in an orthogonal space, but they have a secret curvature. Seduction is that which follows this curvature, subtly accentuating it until things, in following their own cycle, reach the superficial abyss where they are dissolved."

-Jean Baudrillard: *The Ecstasy of Communication*, 70

Virtual Condensations of Form



Part 3: The Materiality of Image

For the series of images shown in this section I used information from the New York City tax assessment website³ to visualize relationships among leasable space, density, land value, and economic efficiency.

In the exercise described in Part 2, the Network of Affiliation image is produced as a series of vectors. These vectors are then translated into folds or lines of force in order to form a surface, producing the temporal field images. The translation from vectors to surfaces involves a loss of specificity. In the exercise in Part 3 there is a more direct relationship between information and image. Each unit of data has a direct formal correspondence in the construction of the image; there is no extrapolation of form in order to connect discrete points.

The first step was to place the raw data in a geographical relationship within the street grid. Next, the total floor area of each building is represented as a rectangle proportional to the building dimensions as listed in the assessment record (irregular dimensions are averaged to a simple length-by-width formula). These floor plates are centered on the location of the building within the street grid. The image depicting simply these overlapping frames visualizes a "Density Shadow."

The Density Shadow shows the tallest buildings as single large floorplates which are dispersed across the site. Thus the actual areas that carry the most floors appear the least dense, while those where a number of smaller buildings are clustered together between larger buildings appear the most dense. This counter-intuitive way of depicting density is a product of the logic of translating information into image. Legibility of the information, once it becomes image, is secondary to the organizational logic that arises out of the process of translation.

The Density Shadow image marks a development in the design process beyond that shown in Part 2. Both the Network of Affiliation image and the Density Shadow image depict virtual qualities of the site; however, the Density Shadow image depicts this virtuality in a manner that is explicit about its own process of becoming-image. The Density Shadow, as the first step of this second series of images, establishes a set of frames which contain the information. **The frames simultaneously spatialize the information and draw it back into two-dimensionality. They embody the expansion that is the process of visualizing the virtual: from data to image to something that proposes itself to the actual world—something (almost) spatial.** Unlike the Network of Affiliation, the Density Shadow is an image that is about image, and therefore a closer depiction of virtuality (which, according to Bergson, can only truly be accessed through the mental image—and then only in fragments).

"When a ray of light passes from one medium into another, it usually traverses it with a change of direction. But the respective densities of the two media may be such that, for a given angle of incidence, refraction is no longer possible. Then we have the total reflection. The luminous point gives rise to a *virtual* image which symbolizes, so to speak, the fact that luminous rays cannot pursue their way. Perception is just a phenomenon of the same kind. That which is given is the totality of the images of the material world, with the totality of their internal elements. But, if we suppose centers of real, that is to say spontaneous, activity, the rays which reach it, and which interest that activity, instead of passing through those centers, will appear to be reflected and thus to indicate the outlines of the object which emits them. There is nothing positive here, nothing added to the image, nothing new. The objects merely abandon something of their real action in order to manifest their virtual influence of the living being upon them. Perception therefore resembles those phenomena of reflexion which result from an impeded refraction; it is like an effect of mirage."

-Henri Bergson: *Matter and Memory*, 37

Raw Data in Street Grid

1: 62.5mil
400x100, 6st
(660 Bave)

58: 190mil
175x100, 42st
(264 w43)
(Westin)

17: 24.2mil
75x100, 10st
(229 w 42)

55: 16mil
145x90, 22st
(250 w43)

20: 10.2mil
105x200, 3st
(215 w 42)

39: 7.5mil
119x100, 5st
(214 w43)

25: 3.18mil
69x100, 5st
(207 w 42)

33: 316mil
200x164, 32st
(3TS)

1,014

1: 22.1mil
75x200, 15st
(680 Bave)

4: 1.14mil
25x60, 5st
(688 Bave)

61: 6.22mil
52x96, 5st, 2bdg
(694 Bave)

59: 5.5mil
50x150, 6st
(260 w44)

10: 5mil
75x42, 5st
(249 W43)

51: 1.31mil
75x100, 4.5st
(240 w44)

12: 57.9mil
76x100, 15st, 2bdg
(217 W43)

49: 4.72mil
57x100, 11st
(234 w44)

29: 102mil
200x207, 32st
(1493bwy)

1,015

1: 63.3mil
100x200, 27st
(700 Bave)

5: 4.1mil
140x100, 5st
(245 w 44)

58: 1.78mil
33x100, 4st
(252 w45)

11: 2.7mil
107x105, 5st
(235 w 44)

55: 2.35mil
88x100, 5st
(242 w45)

15: 5.7mil
95x90, 5st
(221 w 44)

51: 2.6mil
97x95, 6.5st
(234 w45)

36: 321mil
200x308, 53st
(1515 bwy)

1,016

104: .606mil
18x60, 3st
(267 w45)

105: .313mil
16x50, 4st
(265 w45)

5: 482mil
17x50, 4st
(263 w45)

106: 425mil
17x85, 4st
(261 w45)

6: 42mil
17x50, 4st
(259 w45)

7: 3.7mil
65x201, 7st
(251 w45)

10: 2.5mil
20x201, 3st
(249 w45)

11: 2.25mil
100x100, 2.5st
(239 w45)

29: 333mil
80x149, 58st
(1531 bwy)
on 207x434

58: 3.16mil
66x100, 0st
(pkg w46)

57: 395mil
17x55, 4st
(252 w46)

48: 2.99mil
113x100, 5st
(226 w46)

1,017

1: 49.2mil
143x58, 22st
(1475 bwy)

5: 695.4mil
200x187, 48st
(1472 bwy)
(4 Times Sq)

15: 2.03mil
60x100, 2st
(135 w42)

17: 1.13mil
20x100, 1.5st
(133 w42)

18: 1.24mil
20x50, 6st
(131 w42)

19: .853mil
20x87, 2st
(129 w42)

20: 1.5mil
40x42, 2st
(125 w42)

21: 1.11mil
20x40, 4.5st
(123 w42)

22: 3.56mil
20x200, 4.5st
(121 w42)

23: 1.24mil
25x42, 3st
(119 w42)

24: .969mil
25x100, 1st
(117 w42)

25: .968mil
25x100, 1st
(115 w42)

26: 1.12mil
25x70, 1st
(113 w42)

27: 1.03mil
25x100, 1st
(111 w42)

28: 8.33mil
65x100, 2st
(109 w42)

37: 1.02mil
22x80, 2st
(106 w43)

38: 3.67mil
100x95, 1st
(108 w43)

40: 4.34mil
63x90, 8st
(132 w43)

45: 3.81mil
64x100, 4st
(124 w43)

137: 1.19mil
23x100, 1st
(104 w43)

36: 2.6mil
27x100, 4st
(111 w43)

38: 2.65mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

39: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

40: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

41: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

42: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

43: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

44: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

45: 3.13mil
20x80, 1st
(111 w43)

995

1: 130mil
200x126, 33st
(1500 bwy)

9: 5.16mil
60x90, 6st
(147 w43)

12: 7.65mil
60x200, 7st
(141 w43)
(parking)

14: 7.3mil
144x100, 13st
(127 w43)
(woodstock)

20: 1.1mil
21x100, 5st
(125 w43)

21: 3.08mil
125x100, 1st
(113 w43)

156: 1.98mil
24x100, 5st
(158 w44)

56: 1.8mil
24x98, 13st
(156 w44)

54: 1.94mil
41x100, 5st
(152 w44)

51: 1.51mil
30x100, 10st
(142 w44)

50: 495mil
15x70, 3st
(140 w44)

49: 2mil
35x100, 8st
(136 w44)

46: 3.5mil
70x100, 6st
(130 w44)

43: 1.1mil
75x80, 15st
(120 w44)

29: 213mil
201x243, 44st
(1133 Gave)

996

1: 138mil
203x256, 4st
(1514 bwy)

10: 89.8mil
117x201, 48st
(153 w44)

47: 4.3mil
35x100, 8st
(132 w45)

17: 15.8mil
60x85, 21st
(145 w44)

19: 21.1mil
100x100, 13st
(123 w44)

23: 2.25mil
105x80, 4st
(111 w44)

41: 114mil
80x140, 40st
(120 w45)

29: 153mil
200x210, 40st
(1155 Gave)

997

1001-1005: 214mil
180x186, 44st
(1538-1540 bwy)
(Lucy + Bernellmann)

8: 1.97mil
86x100, 6st
(149 w45)

12: 9.44mil
60x98, 12st
(145 w45)

15: 1.08mil
35x100, 1st
(137 w45)

16: 771mil
20x50, 4st
(135 w45)

116: .654mil
20x83, 4st
(133 w45)

17: .78mil
20x95, 4st
(131 w45)

18: 3.1mil
58x74, 15st
(125 w45)

120: .881mil
19x58, 5st
(123 w45)

21: 1.42mil
38x82, 3st
(121 w45)

25: 5.44mil
45x90, 12st
(115 w45)

26: 6.5mil
60x90, 12st
(109 w45)

61: 7.57mil
21x100, 4st
(1550 bwy)

55: 1.75mil
30x90, 7st
(150 w46)

54: 1.48mil
15x97, 5st
(146 w46)

52: .866mil
15x80, 5st
(144 w46)

152: 1.18mil
15x101, 5st
(142 w46)

52: 1.49mil
15x96, 5st
(140 w46)

151: .531mil
15x95, 5st
(138 w46)

51: .536mil
15x57, 5st
(136 w46)

50: 1.44mil
15x101, 5st
(134 w46)

47: 23.5mil
80x91, 17st
(126 w46)

41: 9.52mil
150x100, 4st
(114 w46)

29: 218mil
172x197, 48st
(1177 Gave)

998

61-4.79mil
800x9, 3st
(780 Ave)
70x100, 0st
parking
31: 1.07mil
(770 BaVe)
14: 1.51mil
42x125, 5st
(729 BaVe)

6: 55mil
150x100, 18st
(235 w 46)

57: 2.45mil
100x90, 4st
(256 w47)

13: 6.6mil
75x100, 7st
(227 w 46)

56: 7.45mil
25x92, 5st
(254 w47)

16: 1.1mil
50x100, 0st
(223 w 46)
parking

55: 9.61mil
25x70, 5st
(252 w47)

54: 1.41mil
25x70, 5st
(250 w47)

18: 47mil
218x201, 22st
(219 w 46)

44: 3.06mil
33x95, 10st
(224 w47)

20: 3.49mil
139x90, 4st
(203 w 46)

1101-1102: 82.8mil
(1587 bwy)
139x4.18mil
(1706 Ave)
710x5, 4st
(28.9 Avedale)
71x74.38
(1553 bwy)
27: 10.2mil
71x74.38
(1553 bwy)
26: 8.11mil
480x5, 3st
(1553 bwy)

1,018

61: 3.34mil
61x97, 2st
(782 BaVe)
1: 1.07mil
139x100, 51st
(770 BaVe)

5: 17.8mil
75x126, 4st
(261 w47)

8: 1.34mil
50x90, 4st
(257 w47)

10: 1.1mil
50x100, 0st
(253 w47)
parking

12: 2.4mil
100x100, 2st
(243 w47)

60: 5.64mil
22x50, 4.5st
(246 w48)

59: 1.18mil
22x50, 4.5st
(244 w48)

55: 17.6mil
101x96, 16st
(234 w48)

154: 1.1mil
17x50, 4st
(232 w48)

54: 1.51mil
17x93, 5st
(230 w48)

50: 2.45mil
79x100, 5st
(220 w48)

1101-1142: 272mil
200x220* 42st
(1585 bwy)

1001-1002: 74mil
190x72*, 25st
(2 Times Sq)

1,019

1: 24.5mil
201x80, 14st
(790 BaVe)

136: 811mil
18x42, 3st
(202 w49)

59: 5.92mil
80x90, 8st
(244 w49)

57: 4mil
40x90, 7st
(240 w49)

5: 93.3mil
190x82, 43st
(227 w48)
on 240x100

53: 2.45mil
95x100, 5st
(230 w49)

51: 17.6mil
65x89, 15st
(224 w49)

14: 2.2mil
83x201, 4st
(219 w48)

49: 3.42mil
40x100, 9st
(220 w49)

46: 122mil
202x201, 43st
(1601 bwy)

29: 18.2mil
112x120, 10st
(1602 bwy)

38: 11mil
89x65, 3st
(1604 bwy)

35: 3.83mil
46x51, 2st
(734 7ave)

36: 1.47mil
20x50, 4st
(740 7ave)

1,020

1: 1.15mil
200x250, 50st
(810 BaVe)

5: 896mil
25x100, 2st
(247 w48)

7: 2.1mil
78x100, 1st
(241 w49)

9: 5.4mil
18x50, 5st
(239 w49)

10: 3.02mil
54x86, 9st
(233 w49)

12: 1.98mil
75x42, 4st
(225 w49)
on 75x100

15: 2.43mil
100x100, 4st
(215 w49)

48: 880mil
20x84, 5st
(214 w50)

50: 2.59mil
60x96, 6st
(218 w50)

40: 828mil
20x100, 3st
(216 w50)

19: 3.1mil
124x110, 11st
(1613 bwy)

43: 2.86mil
25x75, 4st
(1625 bwy)

46: 5.3mil
50x128, 3st
(1627 bwy)

1,021

26: 1.16mil
100x139, 35st
(750 7ave)
on 150x138

37: 3.73mil
50x57, 3st
(1628 bwy)

36: 2.33mil
42x90, 3st
(750 7ave)

1: 15.2mil
42x90, 4st
(1552 bwy)

3: 22.3mil
60x180, 17st
(1560 bwy)

62: 87.5mil
40x216, 43st
(1568 bwy)
Goodland + Hilltop

8: 1.14mil
20x80, 7st
(155 w46)

54: 7.69mil
71x98, 13st
(150 w47)

9: 5.56mil
50x60, 14st
(151 w46)

53: 7.43mil
19x70, 4st
(146 w47)

11: 818mil
19x41, 4st
(149 w46)

111: 886mil
18.75x95, 4st
(147 w46)

48: 5mil
38x95, 9st
(132 w47)

46: 3mil
38x82, 7st
(128 w47)

12: 7.59mil
125x200, 5.5st
(143 w46)

17: 4.56mil
38x100, 9st
(129 w46)

19: 155mil
125x201, 25st
(114 w47)

29: 208mil
197x209, 42st
(1185 6ave)

999

64: 7.81mil
50x120, 3st
(711 7ave)
3 bldgs

62: 2.48mil
25x55, 4st
(717 7ave)

61: 4.54mil
42x79, 3st
(719 7ave)

1: 11.1mil
140x80, 10st
(165 w47)

59: 9.68mil
20x46, 4st
(166 w48)

58: 1.47mil
34x60, 4st
(162 w48)

7: 10.6mil
80x100, 10st
(157 w47)

57: 9.23mil
17x62, 4st
(160 w48)

56: 1.76mil
34x60, 5st
(156 w48)

53: 4.26mil
75x42, 6st
(148 w48)

11: 8mil
120x80 7st
(145 w47)

49: 2.3mil
74x100, 5st
(138 w48)

29: 489mil
188x421, 45st
(1211 6ave)

1,000

1: 6.16mil
50x69, 13st
(721 7ave)

3: 1.94mil
13x25x87, 5st
(725 7ave)

4: 2.7mil
25x100, 6st
(727 7ave)

1001: 29.6mil
100x100, 17st
(729 7ave)

101: 591mil
17x40, 4st
(167 w48)

59: 2.59mil
50x98, 6st
(152 w49)

102: 1.75mil
16x50, 4st
(165 w48)
2bdg on 42x105

58: 1.64mil
21x50, 4st
(150 w49)

6: 6.76mil
115x98, 7st
(155 w48)

157: 1.87mil
22x50, 4st
(148 w49)

55: 13.2mil
64x94, 13st
(142 w49)

11: 1.52mil
20x101, 5st
(151 w48)

12: 1.93mil
40x200, 5st
(vacant)

29: 521mil
192x494, 51st
(1221 6ave)

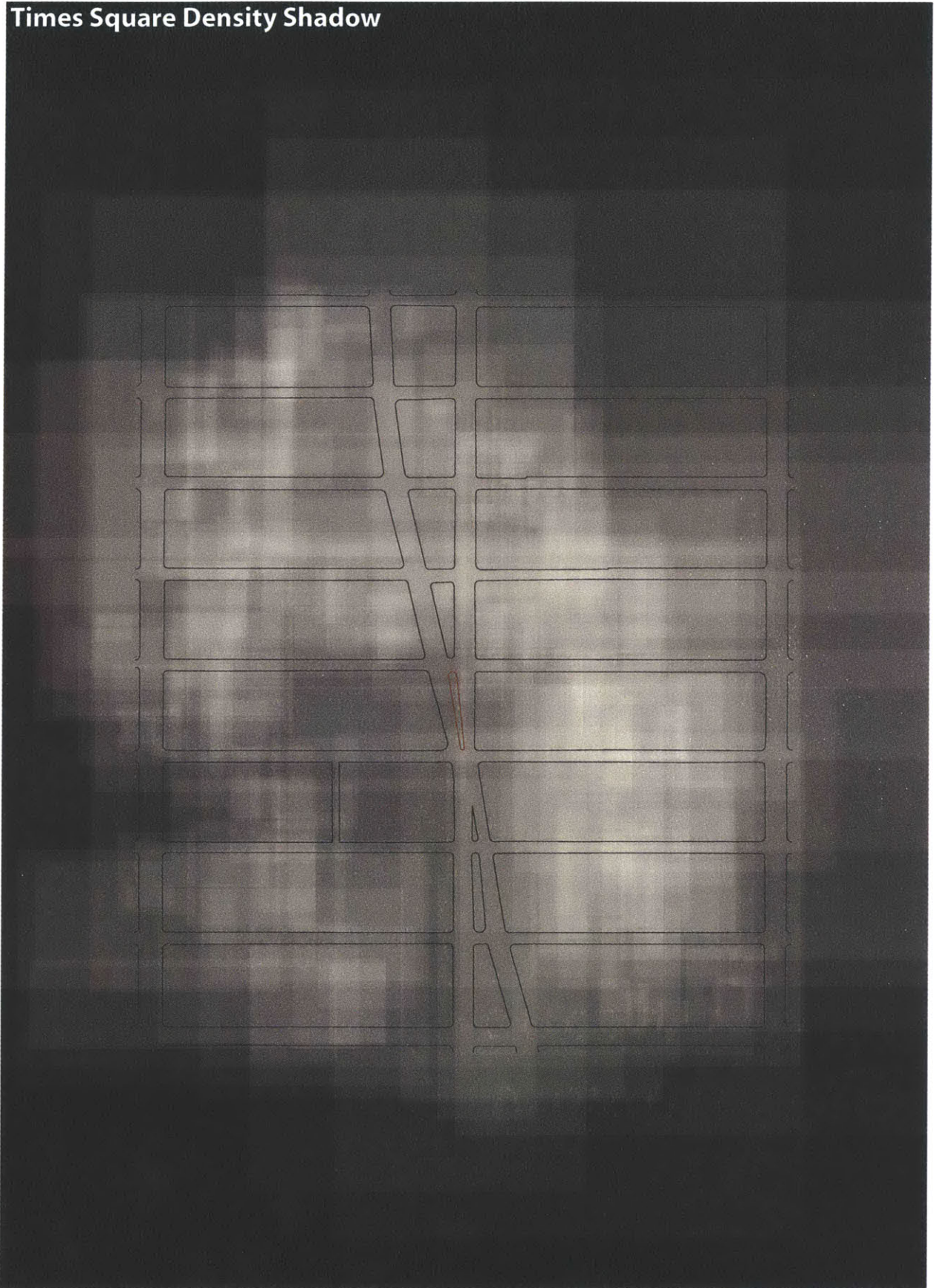
1,001

1: 362mil
200x250, 33st
(745 7 ave)
on 200x250

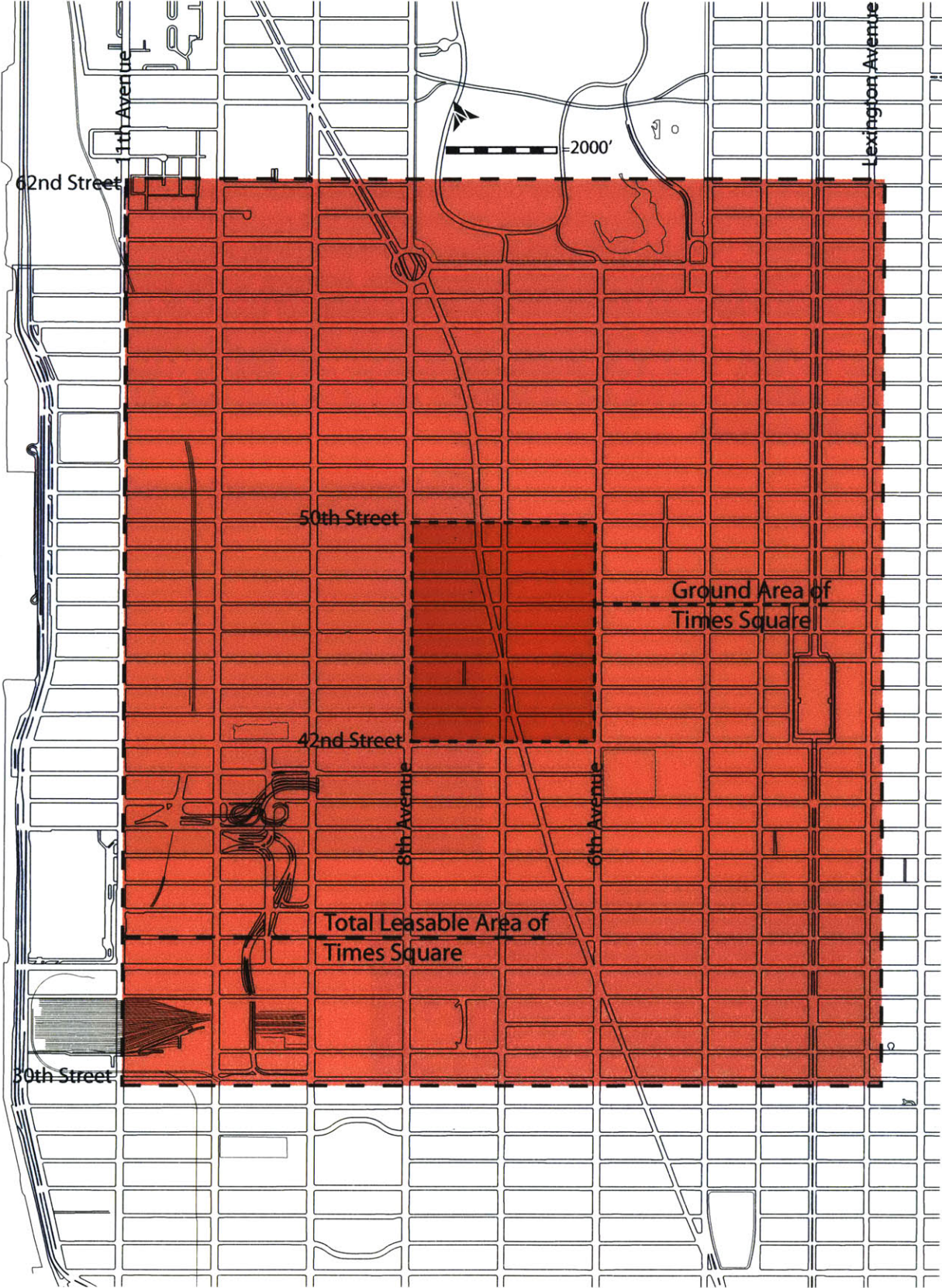
1001-1056: 548mil
200x285, 54st
(1251 6 ave)
on 200x480

1,002

Times Square Density Shadow



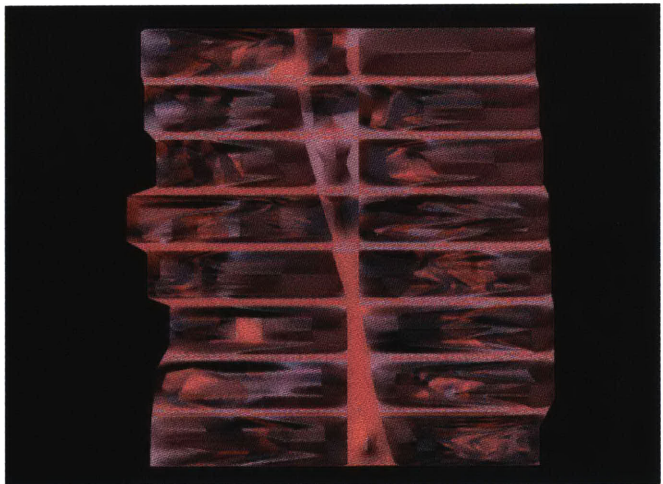
Times Square Floor Area: Total Leasable Space is 17x Total Land Area



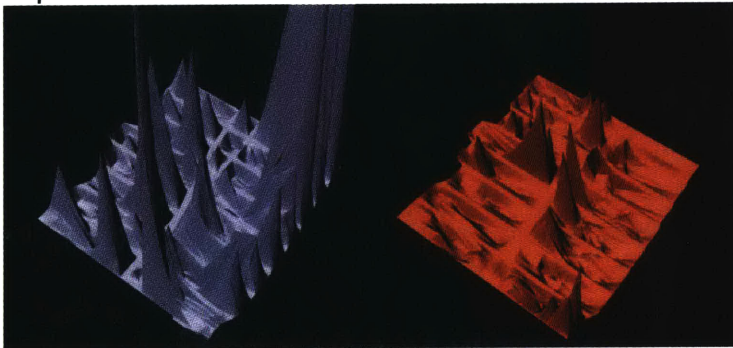
For the next set of images, land value is represented as elevation. Each property, located in the street grid, is represented as a point above or below street level. Two surfaces are produced: the blue surface represents the absolute assessment value while the red surface represents the value per total area of leasable space for the property. The street level represents the average value for each surface. The heights have been adjusted according to an inverse exponential scale in order to accentuate the differences between values closer to the median value.

The two surfaces produce a Value Field, a virtual skyline with opposing implications. The highest points of the blue surface locate properties that have maximized their economic potential, and those on the red surface indicate properties that must produce tremendous revenues relative to their size. While these values are not direct indications of the profitability of a property, they are certainly two contributory factors. However, as with the previous images, this virtual image is not intended to be legible as a graph of known values. It is an image that uncovers patterns about the site that exist only in the data that describes it. Rather than relying on the reality of the site to direct the interpretation of its data, the virtual image insists on its own reality, allowing one to draw implications out of the image itself and project them back into the actual site.

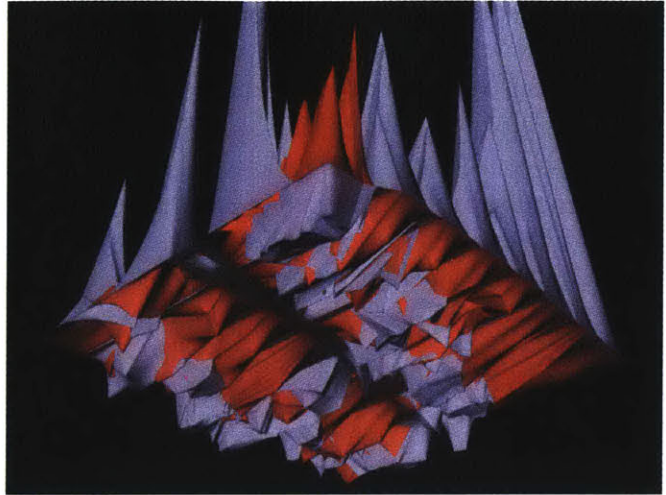
Plan



Separate Blue and Red Surfaces

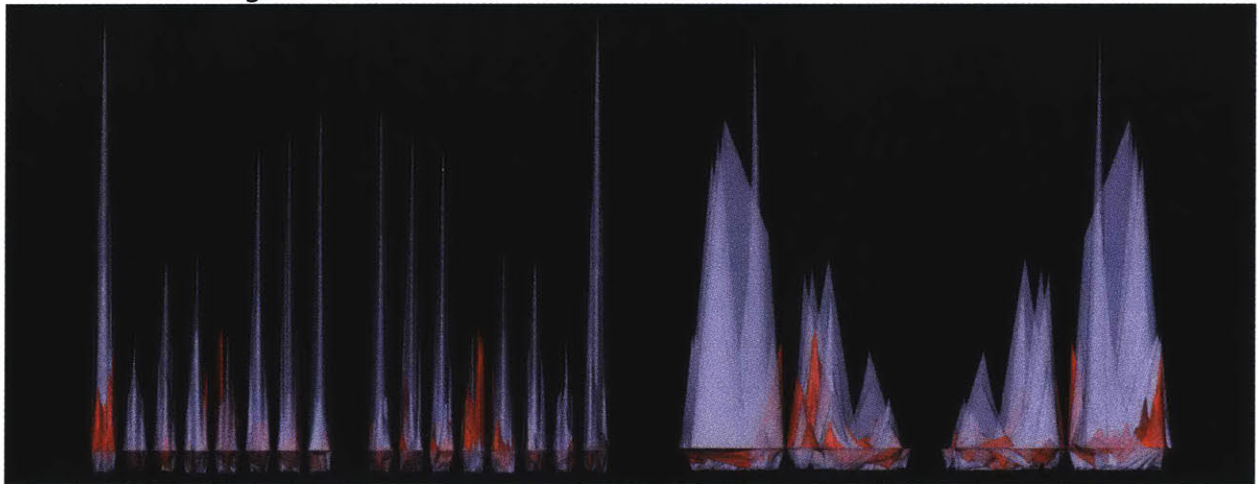


Value Field Images

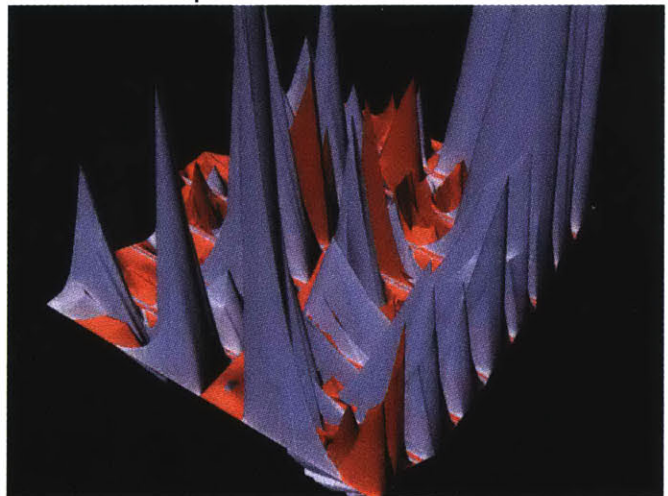


Value Field: Bottom

Elevations: Looking West, East, South, North

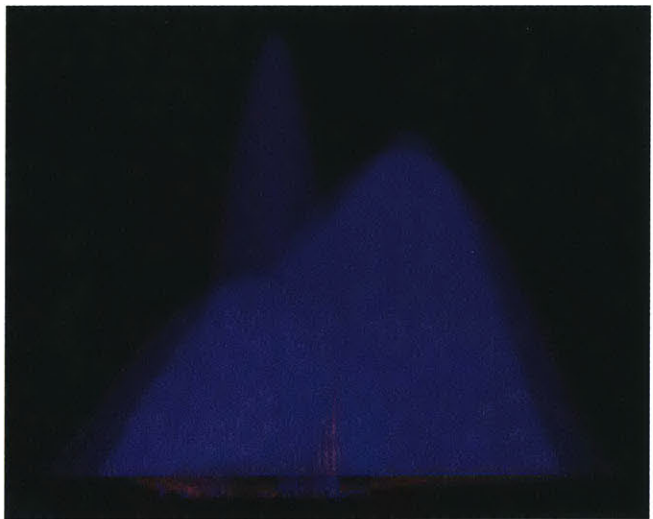


Value Field: Top



The final set of images for this series combines the information from the Density Shadow and Value Field images. Each property is visualized as a unit with two spatial and two economic dimensions. While the Value Field images allow the separate properties to remain distinct points, merging this information with the Density Shadow condenses the image into a series of volumes that are both intersecting and concentric. The frames of the Density Shadow become spatial, containing the economic data as distended double-surfaces. All of the information remains in a direct relationship to the form of the image—its components are determined by property location, total floor area, total value, and value per floor area—yet the territory revealed by the image is something unexpected, transcendent. It hints at a shimmering, depthless space, a materiality of bulging translucence and variable pockets of captured light. **Here the image seems completely to engulf the information with its seductive nature; it presents itself as an otherworldly landscape, as a tenuous physicality, as form straining for material expression.**

I call this series of images “Economic Bubbles.” It is forged out of information which describes the accumulation of capital at the site, and its form suggests the process by which accumulation is framed and imaged—the translation of capital into image. The frames represent an economics of space, leasable dimensions which in this site are practically synonymous with capital. Spatialized, the frames become swollen, distended with value; enveloping and encroaching on one another they accumulate in a luminous density. The fabrication of this image thus reveals what is simultaneously the most obvious and most profound theoretical grounding for Times Square: Debord’s notion of spectacle. “The spectacle is capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image.” The materiality suggested by these images, engendered as it is by a visual examination of accumulation, embodies this theory.



4. The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.

34. The spectacle is capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image.

53. [In the society of the spectacle]... the commodity contemplates itself in a world of its own making.

-Guy Debord: *The Society of the Spectacle*

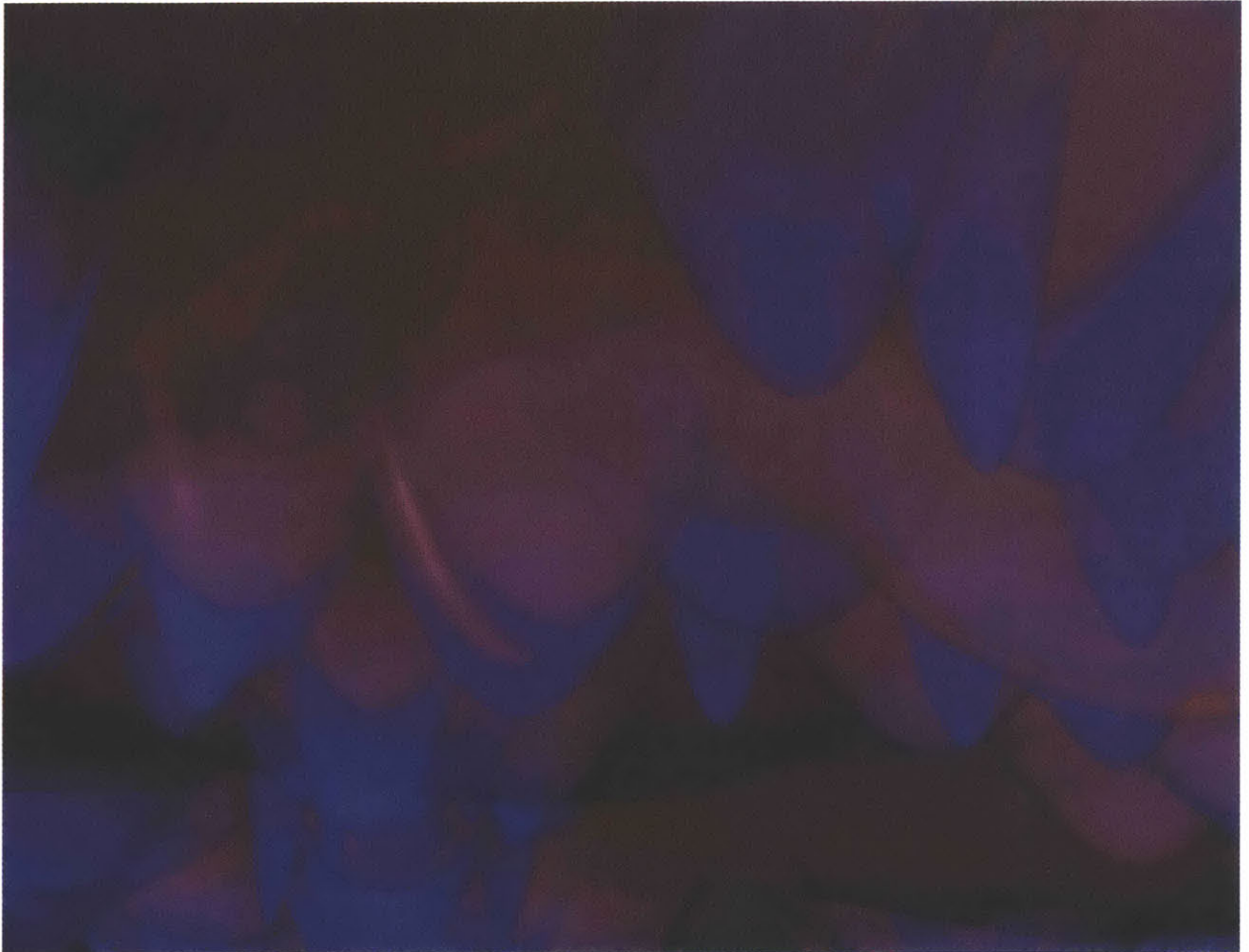
"Thus the consumer society was lived under the the sign of alienation; it was a society of the spectacle — but at least there was spectacle, and the spectacle, even if alienated, is never obscene. Obscenity begins when there is no more spectacle, no more stage, no more theatre, no more illusion, when every-thing becomes immediately transparent, visible, exposed in the raw and inexorable light of information and communication."

-Jean Baudrillard: *The Ecstasy of Communication*, 21-22

Economic Bubbles



Economic Bubbles





Economic Bubbles



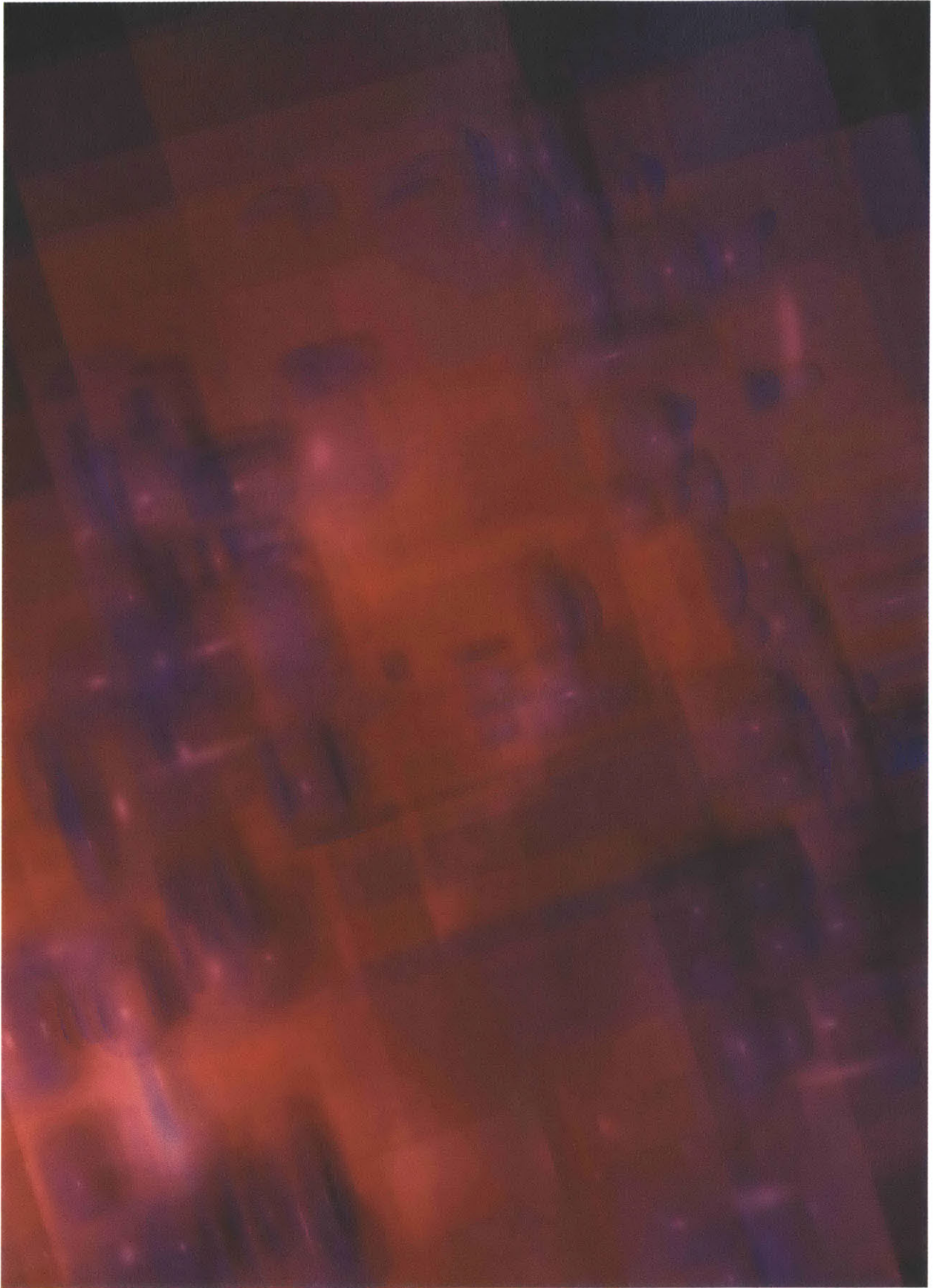
"The computer redefines materiality rather than abandoning it in favor of the seduction of pure image."

-Antoine Picon: "Architecture and the Virtual: Toward a New Materiality"

These are pure images, purely seductive, and yet they are materially transformative. They are suggestive of patterning, texture, effect, organization. For Bergson, the subject's conception of the material world is inseparable from image. The image is how materiality is conceived, how it resides in the mind, and how it is transported through time as a continuous entity.

"Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of 'images.' And by 'image' we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a *representation*, but less than that which the realist calls a *thing* — an existence placed halfway between the 'thing' and the 'representation.' This conception of matter is simply that of common sense."

-Henri Bergson: *Matter and Memory*, 9-10





Economic Bubbles



Part 4: The Landscape of Image

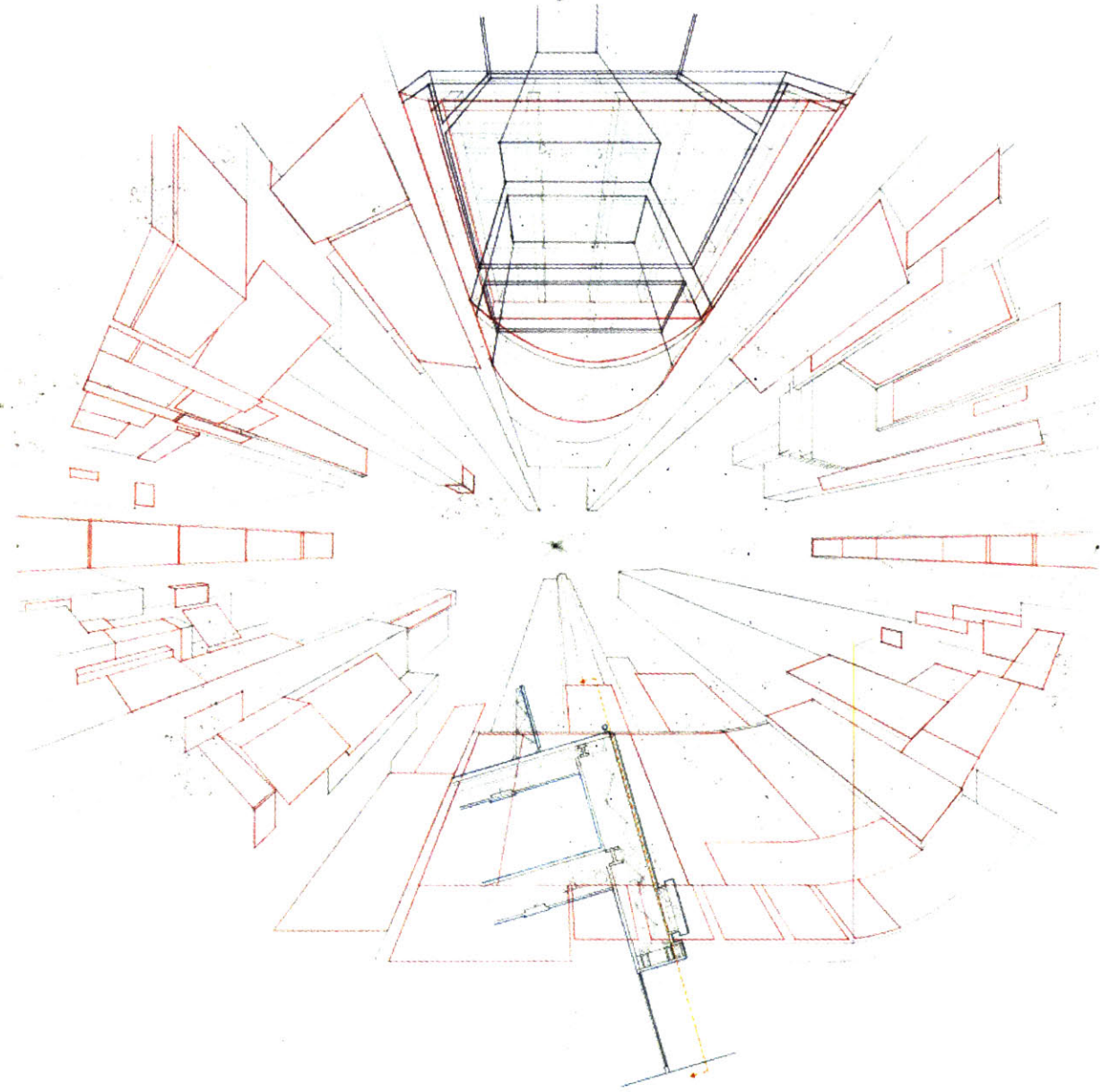
Times Square is a crush of bodies, of images. Bloated with capital, it is the epicenter of spectacle. Times Square is a place of tremendous concentration — tremendous virtuality. From the studios of Times Square, media networks produce and distribute images to the world. On the walls of the streets of Times Square, the world's producers of consumable goods gather an image catalog of their wares. Behind these walls, the financial institutions that track and regulate the world's markets inhabit the image of prosperity, of desires fulfilled. Annually, millions of tourists make their pilgrimage to this landscape of images, taking back as proof of their visit images of images.

The landscape of images is carefully regulated. The advertisers operate according to a guidebook of good practice: what size to make the text, what color contrast best draw one's eye, how much text can hold one's attention. The marketing agencies understand their audience, defining whole populations by simple statistical tabulations. The mass audience of the Times Square Spectacle is the average of the world market, the median consumer.

My architectural proposal inhabits the virtuality of the place as a site of image production and reproduction. The building visualizes the landscape of images as it is seen in real time: as it is produced. It produces an image of becoming-image, an idealized form of the process of presentation and viewing; it is the Times Square Imago.

On the following pages are source images from which the Imago draws its virtual landscape. Some are drawings and photographs of the physical landscape, showing the color, position, and scale of the physical images which line the streets and dominate the visual field. Others are directions which outline the procedures for achieving maximum visual effect, or which demonstrate the technical specifications of the image medium. Still others are lists which provide a demographic portrait of the image audience. Together, this information describes the physical and virtual aspects of this image landscape: what is seen and by whom. To put it another way, this data describes what the viewer sees as image, and how the image is produced to anticipate a particular category of viewer.

Times Square Image-scape: Fish-eye Perspective Looking Up From Site



Site Plan



Site of Image Collage



Times Square Alliance Site Description



RETAIL GROWTH IN TIMES SQUARE – A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

WHO LIVES HERE?

33,360 households
71% under 50 years old
Median income of \$75,000 for residents between 25 and 34 years old
70% employed in creative occupations (arts, media, publishing, etc.)
58% college educated
49% “Urban Up and Comers” and 37% “Successful Singles” as defined by Claritas Inc.

WHO WORKS HERE?

One in four Midtown office employees works in Times Square
71% of employees are under the age of 44
51% of employees have an annual income over \$75,000
Times Square’s office worker demographics are similar to the Clinton resident profile, offering retailers 24-hour access to a highly desirable consumer market

IS THERE MONEY TO BE MADE HERE? YES!

Office workers and residents combined represent a highly “captive” market with total spending potential of \$1.4 billion

Resident Spending Potential

General Retail potential - \$266 million
Food and Beverage potential - \$123 million
Other - \$220 million
Total: \$608 million

Employee Spending Potential

41% of Times Square employees spend over \$50 per shopping trip on clothing
51% of Times Square employees spend over \$50 per shopping trip on shoes
60% of office workers spend over \$25 on a restaurant meal
General Retail potential - \$217 million
Food and Beverage potential - \$527 million
Total: \$744 million

IS TIMES SQUARE CAPTURING ITS MARKET POTENTIAL? NO!



90% of Times Square office workers prefer to buy clothes and shoes elsewhere
75% of office workers are dissatisfied with the current retail mix
60% of office workers are dissatisfied with their lunch options
Only 22% of Times Square employees who live in New York City dine out in Times Square
Times Square could reasonably expect to capture \$577 million in office worker retail and food and beverage expenditures
Times Square loses between \$135 and \$253 million in sales potential annually, largely due to office worker and resident spending “leaking” to other retail concentrations

WHO COULD MAKE MONEY HERE?


82% of office workers would patronize a bookstore
57% of office workers would shop in a mid-priced, quality clothing store such as Banana Republic
48% of office workers would shop in a home furnishings store such as Pottery Barn
Times Square’s employees and residents represent the same young, urban consumer base eager for higher quality, unique and original products and services – all of which are currently underrepresented in this area

Source: <http://www.timessquarebid.org>, 11/04

Clear Channel Marketing Sheet for Times Square Spectaculars

TIMES SQUARE-NEW YORK



"Coverage like no other place on earth."

BENEFITS/HIGHLIGHTS

- Some of the most famous signs in the world.
- Dominates the actual physical landscape.
- Generates publicity just being there.
- Massive reach and frequency.
- Secondary coverage like no other place on earth – (TV, media, etc).
- 270,000 People work within Times Square.
- 10 + Million vehicles pass by annually.
- Over 77 million people boarded a subway in Times Square last year.
- Works 7/24/365.

DISTRIBUTION

- Times Square, New York

SIZE

- No two spectacular structures are the same, sizes vary by each and every location.

EXTENSIONS/EMBELLISHMENTS

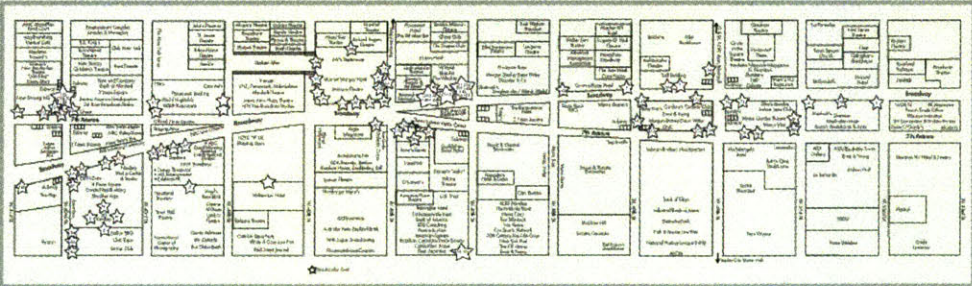
- Extensions break the boundary of a panel's standard rectangular dimensions and improve viewer attention.
- Embellishments also break standard panel boundaries but more often in 3 Dimensional fashions.
- Each location has unique extension requirements, consult with your Clear Channel Spectacolor representative for details.

CONTRACT TERM


- Typically purchased 52 weeks or longer.
- Shorter term rates and programs may be offered.
- Purchased individually, or in packages.

PRODUCTION

- Production often includes 3D embellishments, extensions, video screens, vinyl and many other unique process that can create unmatched impact.



Visit our web site: <http://www.clearchannelspectacolor.com>



"The Choice is Clear!"

Source: Clear Channel Outdoor '04 Media Planning Guide

Clear Channel Outdoor: New York City Demographic Sheet

CLEAR CHANNEL OUTDOOR

HOME CORPORATE MARKETS PRODUCTS RESOURCES RATES PRESS ROOM
INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL TOURS

New York INFORMATION DEMOGRAPHICS PRODUCTS CONTACT

Market Demographics

- ◆ DMA Rank 1st
- ◆ DMA - Population (Adult 18+) 15,530,628
- ◆ % Population Change (1990-2003) 11%
- ◆ Race Group Distribution:
 - ◇ Caucasian 64%
 - ◇ African American 17%
 - ◇ Asian 7%
 - ◇ Other 12%
- ◆ Hispanic Ethnicity 20%
- ◆ Median Age 36.9
- ◆ Average Household Income \$78,069
- ◆ Total Vehicles 9,501,467
- ◆ Population Per Square Mile 1,756

Market In Motion

- ◆ Drive to Work Alone 56.4%
- ◆ Carpool 10.6%
- ◆ Public Transportation 26.1%
- ◆ Average Commute Time To Work (in Minutes) 30
- ◆ Commuters Driving 0-29 Minutes To Work 52.2%
- ◆ Commuters Driving 30+ Minutes To Work 47.8%

Research Profiles for New York

- Heavy Driver 31.2%
- Plan To Buy New Car 10.9%
- Attended Casino Past Year 40.2%
- Plan To Buy Cellular Service 14.7%
- Attended Live Theater 43.4%
- Golf 11.5%
- See Movie Opening Weekend 9.9%
- No Newspaper 38.6%
- Access Internet 64.3%

SITE MAP PRIVACY CONTACT CLEARCHANNEL.COM COPYRIGHT ©2004 CLEAR CHANNEL OUTDOOR

Source: <http://www.clearchanneloutdoor.com>, 11/04

Clear Channel Outdoor: New York City Region Summary of Features

HOME	CORPORATE	MARKETS	PRODUCTS	RESOURCES	RATES	PRESS ROOM
INTERNATIONAL	VIRTUAL TOURS					

New York

INFORMATION	DEMOGRAPHICS	PRODUCTS	CONTACT
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The New York Market, which is comprised of New York City's 5 Boroughs, Suburban New York, Northern New Jersey and Fairfield County in Connecticut, represents the largest dollar sales region for advertising exposure, retail sales and effective buying income in the United States. New York has long been recognized as a major cultural and economic center. This market forms a radius of 19 counties throughout New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, all feeding into Manhattan. Of the 14+ million people that make up the New York market, nearly 4,000,000 live in the New Jersey metro area alone. This region is corporate headquarters to many companies such as AT&T, M&M Mars, Campbell Soup and Nabisco Products. Several large pharmaceutical companies including Merck, Johnson & Johnson and Ciba-Geigy are headquartered in the area. In addition, Northern New Jersey is home to the "Miracle Mile", which is a large industrial development located along the Hudson River. This area is also a financial hub for large investment firms such as Fidelity Investments.

New York City commuters live in the surrounding upscale suburbs of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The New York market is also a mecca for retail sales. From Macys and Saks 5th Avenue in New York, to the New Jersey mega-malls, there is an abundance of shopping areas. There are also a large number of sports and entertainment complexes throughout the market. The Giants Stadium and the Meadowlands Sports Arena and Racetrack in New Jersey draw spectators from the surrounding areas, while New York offers Madison Square Garden, Shea Stadium, Yankee Stadium and the Yonkers Racetrack, to name a few.

Clear Channel Outdoor offers Bulletins, Posters, Bus Shelters, Urban Panels and prime Wall Displays. These units target commuters as they travel the highways, interstates and local arterials connecting New York City to the surrounding suburban areas of New York, New Jersey & Connecticut.

Click to Enlarge

SITE MAP	PRIVACY	CONTACT	CLEARCHANNEL.COM	COPYRIGHT ©2004 CLEAR CHANNEL OUTDOOR
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Clear Channel Outdoor Advertising Division Company Data



Clear Channel Outdoor Fact Sheet

Headquarters

Phoenix, Arizona

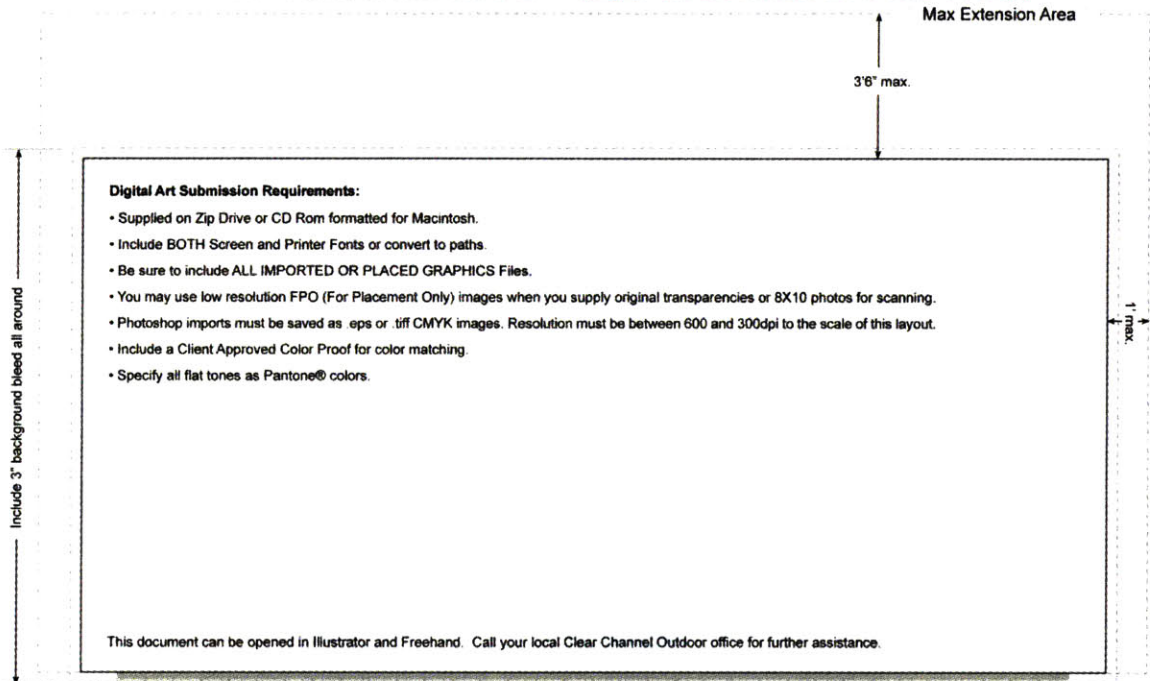
Management

Paul J. Meyer, President and CEO, Clear Channel Outdoor

- Clear Channel Outdoor operates approximately 776,000 outdoor advertising displays in 65 countries.
- Via approximately 155,000 advertising display faces, Clear Channel Outdoor has a presence in 46 U.S. markets, including 19 of the top-20 markets, reaching approximately 56% of adults in the United States.
- On a daily basis, Clear Channel Outdoor reached over 59% of the African American market, 76% of the Hispanic market and 78% of the Asian market.
- Clear Channel Spectacolor is the premiere operator of more than 70 outdoor advertising displays in the Times Square area of New York City.
- Clear Channel Airports reaches 7 of every 10 air travelers each day. Approximately 80% of business travelers pass through one of Clear Channel Airport's 21 U.S. airport facilities.
- Clear Channel Malls provides advertising displays in more than 350 U.S. shopping malls, delivering a point-of-purchase opportunity where 80% of shoppers make purchase decisions.
- Clear Channel Taxi Media operates over 30,000 taxi displays in 14 major U.S. markets including New York, Las Vegas, Boston, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Atlanta and Miami.
- Clear Channel Outdoor celebrated its 100 year anniversary in 2002.

Clear Channel: Template for Premier Panel Graphics

12'3"x 24'6" Premiere Panel Scale: 1/2"=1' (Digital resolution needed at this scale is 300dpi)



Digital Art Submission Requirements:

- Supplied on Zip Drive or CD Rom formatted for Macintosh.
- Include BOTH Screen and Printer Fonts or convert to paths.
- Be sure to include ALL IMPORTED OR PLACED GRAPHICS Files.
- You may use low resolution FPO (For Placement Only) images when you supply original transparencies or 8X10 photos for scanning.
- Photoshop imports must be saved as eps or .tiff CMYK images. Resolution must be between 600 and 300dpi to the scale of this layout.
- Include a Client Approved Color Proof for color matching.
- Specify all flat tones as Pantone® colors.


This document can be opened in Illustrator and Freehand. Call your local Clear Channel Outdoor office for further assistance.

***NOTE:** No bottom extensions



File name	Date:	<p>*NOTE: These Specifications are for a typical Premiere Panel. Verify finished size and extension limitations with your account executive before creating finished artwork.</p> <p>Approved by: _____ Date: _____</p>
Art Director:	AE:	
Extensions total	Size & Scale:	
Image cost:	Misc:	
Other:		

Clear Channel Specifications for Advertisement Design



DESIGNING FOR OUT-OF-HOME

Simplicity is the fundamental guideline for creating good out-of-home design. The most effective out-of-home designs capture the essence of a message with lucid expression. For this reason, good out-of-home design can lead to better advertising executions in other media.

THE SIX POINTS OF GOOD OUT-OF-HOME DESIGN

1. Unify all the elements in a design to create a clear and succinct message. Remember, the viewing time for most out-of-home messages is only a few seconds.
2. Visual elements are just as important as words. Be sure that each element is well defended within the context of a design.
3. Use legible typefaces. Out-of-home displays are often seen from far distances which may cause some typefaces to bleed together while other may lose resolution.
4. Minimize words. The most effective out-of-home designs contain six or less words.
5. Optimize color. Well balanced color selection can enhance the impact of a message.
6. Evaluate the combined elements of a design using the MOVI (Metropolitan Outdoor Visibility Index) test. MOVI is a technique that renders speculative artwork in a simulated out-of-home environment for viewing with slides

THE LEGIBILITY OF TYPEFACES

Kerning - Sufficient kerning between letters assures the legibility of text from far distances. Tight kerning reduces legibility causing adjacent letters to attach together visually. Without proper kerning "clear morning" could be interpreted as "dear mom."

Stacking - A single horizontal line of text allows rapid assimilation of a message without interruption. Multiple text lines increase the time needed to discern a message.

Leading - If more than one text line is necessary, use adequate leading between lines. When a line of text rides on the line below the interplay of descenders and ascenders will make a message difficult to read.

Crowding letters into a restricted space will reduce legibility.

Severely contrasting letter strokes will lose definition when viewed from far distances.

Thin typefaces will become invisible from far distances.

Bulky typefaces lose distinction between letters.

Script sacrifices are difficult to read at any distance.

CONTRAST

Strong contrast in hue and value is essential for creating good out-of-home design. Hue is the identity of color while value measures a color's lightness or darkness. Contrasting colors are best when viewing out-of-home designs from far distances.


1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

The 14 color combinations represent the best use of color contrast for readability. The chart evaluates primary and secondary color combinations taking into account hue and value. Example one is the most legible color combination while example 14 is the least legible.

COLOR FREQUENCY AND VIBRATION

Like sound waves, light rays have varying wave lengths or frequencies. Some pigments absorb light while others reflect it. Reflected frequencies are perceived as color.

Complementary colors, such as red and green, are not legible together because they have similar values that cause the wave lengths to vibrate. Any combination of similar color value, (even without vibration), will produce low visibility. Yellow and black are dissimilar in both hue and value providing the strongest contrast for out-of-home design. White complements dark value colors while black complements colors with light values.



Source: <http://www.clearchanneloutdoor.com>, 11/04

Smartvision Technical Specifications for LED Panels

Video Display Board Specifications for Outdoor Products

	10 mm	12 mm	15 mm	20 mm	25 mm
Technology	LED Lamp	LED Lamp	LED Lamp	LED Lamp	LED Lamp
Pixel Pitch	10 mm	12 mm	15 mm	20 mm	25 mm
Pixel Configuration	1-Red, 1-Green, 1-Blue	1-Red, 1-Green, 1-Blue	2-Red, 2-Green, 1-Blue	2-Red, 2-Green, 1-Blue	2-Red, 2-Green, 1-Blue
Pixel Block Configuration	16 X 16 = 256	16 X 16 = 256	16 X 16 = 256	16 X 16 = 256	16 X 16 = 256
Pixel Grade	Selective High Grade	Selective High Grade	Selective High Grade	Selective High Grade	Selective High Grade
White at 6500° K Max	5,000 cd/m ² 6,000 cd/m ²	2,200 cd/m ² 3,000 cd/m ²	5,000 cd/m ² 6,000 cd/m ²	5,200 cd/m ² 5,900 cd/m ²	5,000 cd/m ² 5,500 cd/m ²
Colors	1.07b	1.07b	1.07b	1.07b	1.07b
Grey Scale	1,024 Shades	1,024 Shades	1,024 Shades	1,024 Shades	1,024 Shades
Optimal Viewing Distance	25 - 114 ft.	30 - 137 ft.	38 - 171 ft.	50 - 228 ft.	62 - 285 ft.
Horizontal Viewing Angle	170°	170°	170°	170°	170°
Vertical Viewing Angle	+30° to 70° or 90°	+30° to 70° or 90°	+30° to 70° or 90°	+30° to 70° or 90°	+30° to 70° or 90°
Louver System	Plastic Visor 4mm	Plastic Visor 4mm	Plastic Visor 15.5mm	Plastic Visor 15.5mm	Plastic Visor 15.5mm
Scanning Speed	300 Hz at 60 fps	300 Hz at 60 fps	300 Hz at 60 fps	300 Hz at 60 fps	300 Hz at 60 fps
Computer Control System	Remote Keypad	Remote Keypad	Remote Keypad	Remote Keypad	Remote Keypad
Warranty	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Power per Block	20 W	24 W	50 W	75 W	130 W
Block Weight	1.4 lbs.	1.8 lbs.	3.25 lbs.	5.6 lbs.	7.2 lbs.

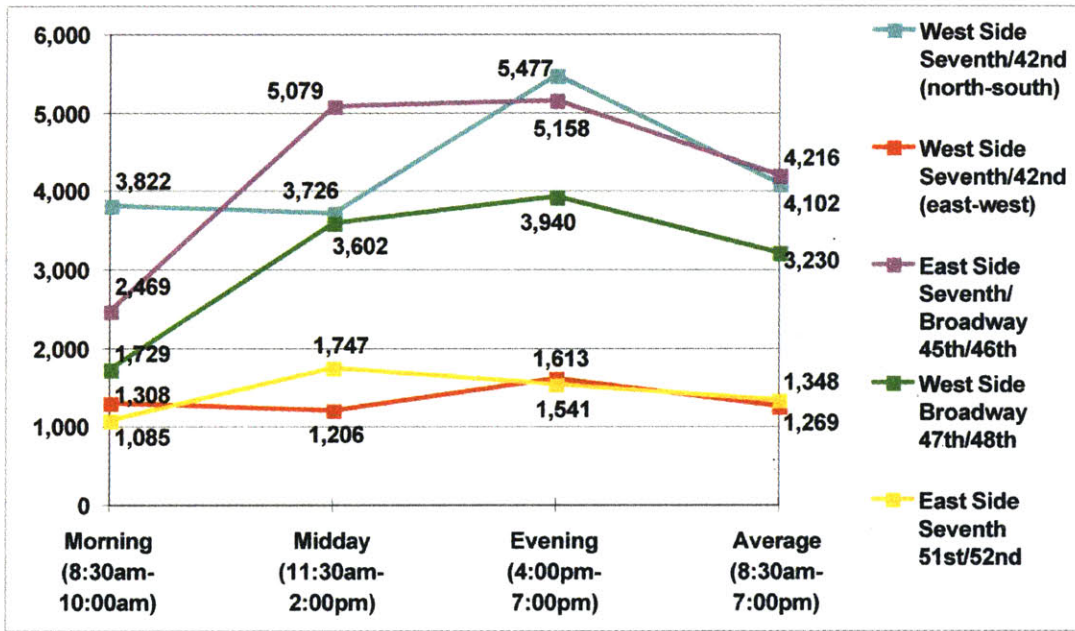
Source: <http://www.smartvision.com/product/outdoor.html>, 11/04

Times Square Pedestrian Counts, 1996

PEDESTRIAN COUNTS SEVENTH AVENUE/BROADWAY STUDY AREA



- The pedestrian counts, taken in August 1996, exceed virtually all of the pedestrian counts for other areas of Manhattan.
- The heaviest traffic was traveling north-south in front of the Virgin Megastore at 1540 Broadway, the Morgan Stanley Building at 1585 Broadway, and in front of Ferrara's on 42nd Street.
- Once the 42nd Street retail strip is fully open and operating, these counts will undoubtedly approach the higher levels along 7th Avenue and Broadway.



Source: Times Square BID Retail and Market Analysis 1996

Times Square Pedestrian Counts, 1999

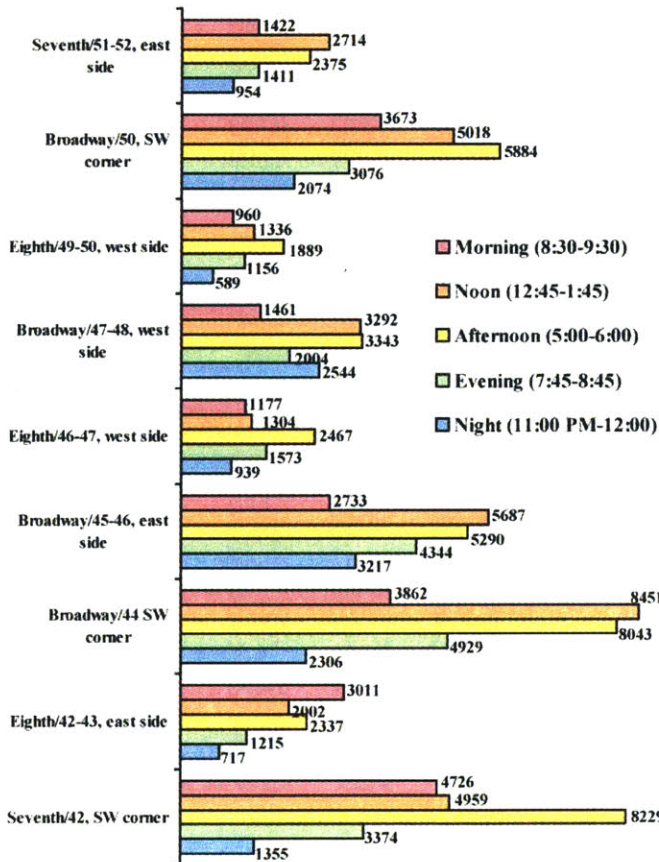
Pedestrian counts were conducted on a Wednesday and a Saturday in early August 1999. The highest volumes are found in the heart of the Bowtie:

- Over 54,500 people passed by the Virgin MegaStore between 8:30 AM and 1:00 AM on a Wednesday, and over 62,400 on a Saturday.
- At the corner of Seventh and 44th Street, two-way pedestrian flow (north-south and east-west) averaged as high as 6,400 persons per hour.

Since 1997, the total pedestrian volume on a Saturday increased significantly -- by 17% -- while the Wednesday volume decreased 3%. This reflects changed pedestrian patterns caused by construction, reconfigured subway entrances, and a lack of retail uses along many blockfronts. Eighth Avenue counts are consistently higher than in 1997.

For complete pedestrian count data please call the BID.

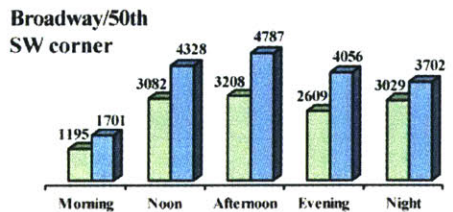
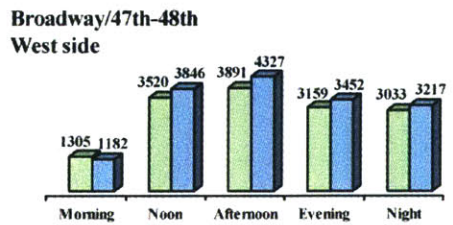
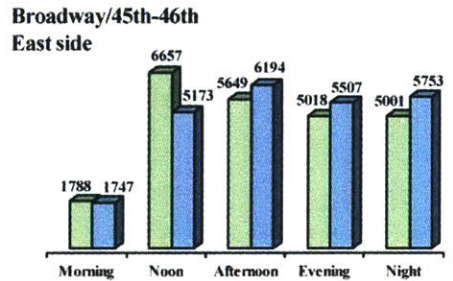
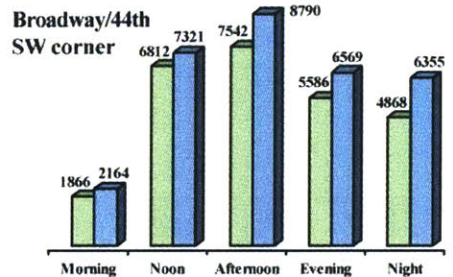
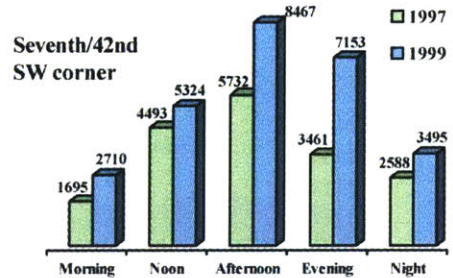
1999 WEDNESDAY COUNTS



Source: Study by Philip Habib & Associates for the Times Square BID

SATURDAY COUNTS, 1997-1999

Peak-hour volumes at selected locations; see Wednesday key for hours

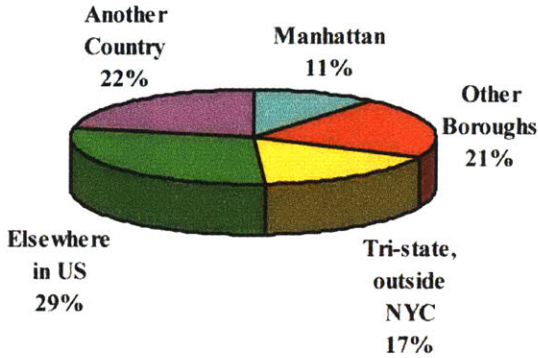


Times Square Pedestrian Survey, 1999

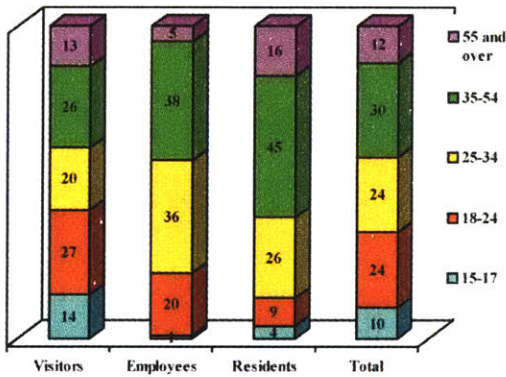
The average pedestrian in Times Square is young, single, middle class, and college educated. The Times Square BID surveyed a sample of 1,002 pedestrians in July 1998. From this survey we estimate that 70% of strollers on a given summer day are visitors, 22% work nearby, and 8% are neighborhood residents.

MARITAL STATUS

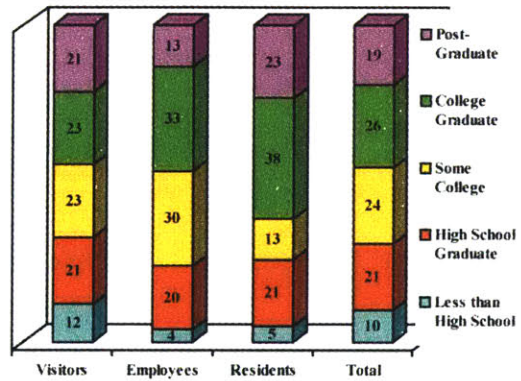
WHERE ARE YOU FROM?



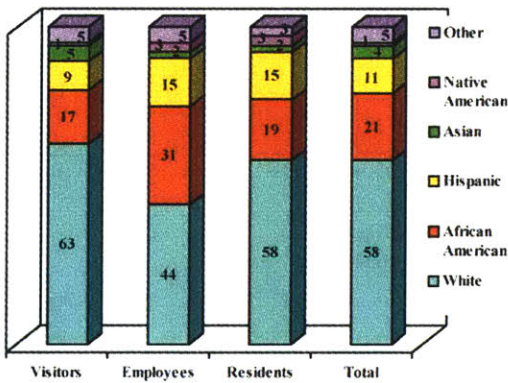
AGE



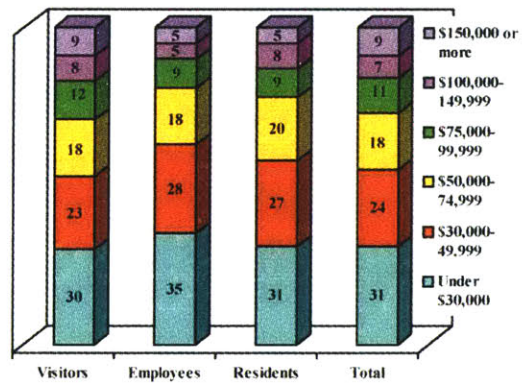
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



RACE



HOUSEHOLD INCOME



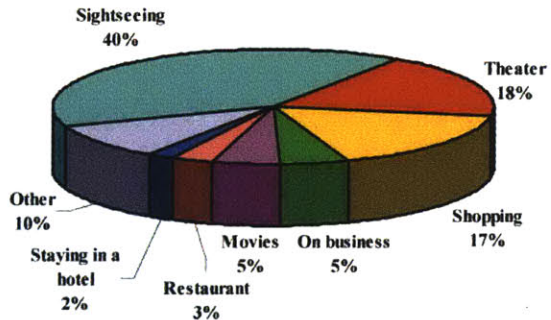
Source: Study by Clark, Martire & Bartolomeo for the Times Square BID

Times Square Pedestrian Survey, 1999

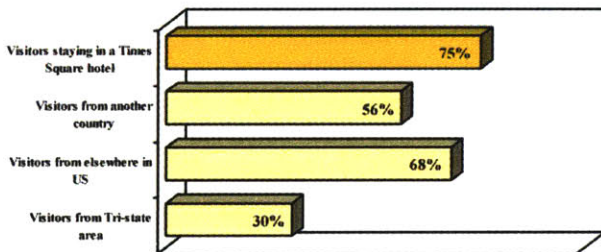
Seventy percent of respondents are visitors to Times Square:

- Visitors spend an average of 3.7 hours in Times Square.
- Average number of people traveling together is 3.
- Thirty-two percent of visitors stayed in a Times Square hotel, with median stay of 3 days at \$175 per night.

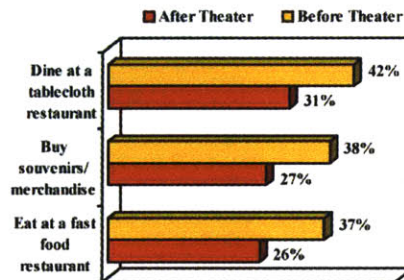
YOUR MAIN REASON FOR BEING IN TIMES SQUARE?



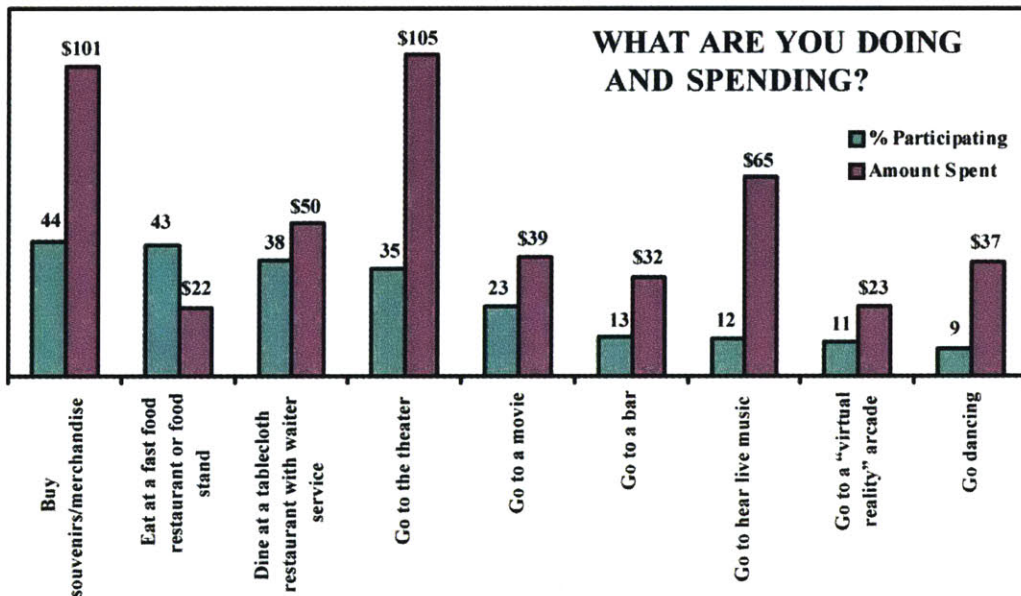
WILL YOU STAY IN A TIMES SQUARE AREA HOTEL THE NEXT TIME YOU ARE IN NEW YORK?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING BEFORE/ AFTER THEATER?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING AND SPENDING?



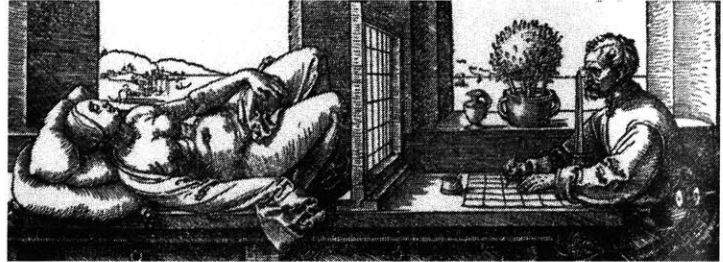
Source: Study by Clark, Martire & Bartolomeo for the Times Square BID

360-Degree Panorama From Site at 46th Street



Part 5: Embodying the Virtual Image

The impetus for the building is to make visible the incessant tabulation and categorization of information about a population and its habits. The specific subject that the building addresses is the visual field of Times Square and the economic transactions that are both its origin and result. The building's purpose is not instruction, but merely to embody the process of observation, tabulation, and visualization in a continuous cycle. Thus the information gathered by the building's devices is not made legible, but rather the process of gathering and reformulating information is monumentalized.



Albrecht Durer's perspective apparatus was a means of regulating representation according to a set of mathematical relationships, reducing what is a continuously unfolding visual field to a measured, framed singularity. The project takes this object as inspiration—a surface which measures and transforms the visual field. While Durer sought to regulate the representation of the object in space, this project seeks to present an image of change through time. Using the capacity of computation, the regulating surface is made semi-sentient, looking back at both the viewer and the object of the gaze, and constructing an image of the evolving visual field itself. The image, thickened by its temporal dimension, occupies the space of the building, while the human observer, virtualized within the image, can only experience the image from within its space, according to its rhythm. This is an architecture of image, an image which strives to break out of its restraining frame, an image that is as much the observing subject as the object of observation.

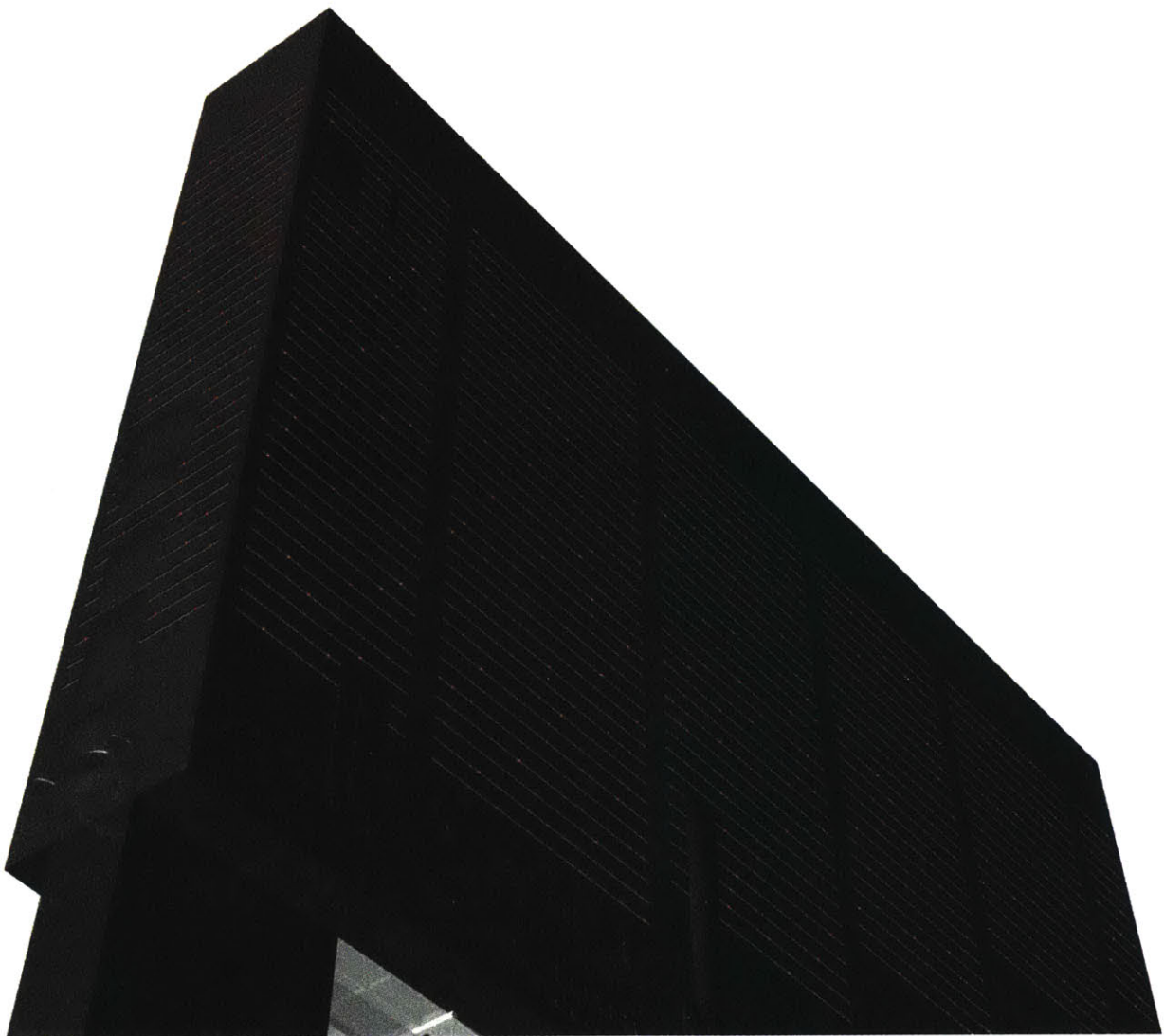
The building, the Times Square Imago, occupies the position of the screen in Durer's etching. It translates between the format of the image and that of the mind. It is the surface that unites the subject and the object. **The Imago is not itself a product of the virtual. It stands between the virtual and the actual; it extends one into the other.** It occupies the position of the body in Bergson's theory:

"Everything then will happen as if, by a true return of real and virtual actions to their points of application or of origin, the external images were reflected by our body into surrounding space and the real actions arrested by it within itself. And that is why its surface, the common limit of the external and the internal, is the only portion of space that is both perceived and felt."

-Henri Bergson: *Matter and Memory*, 57

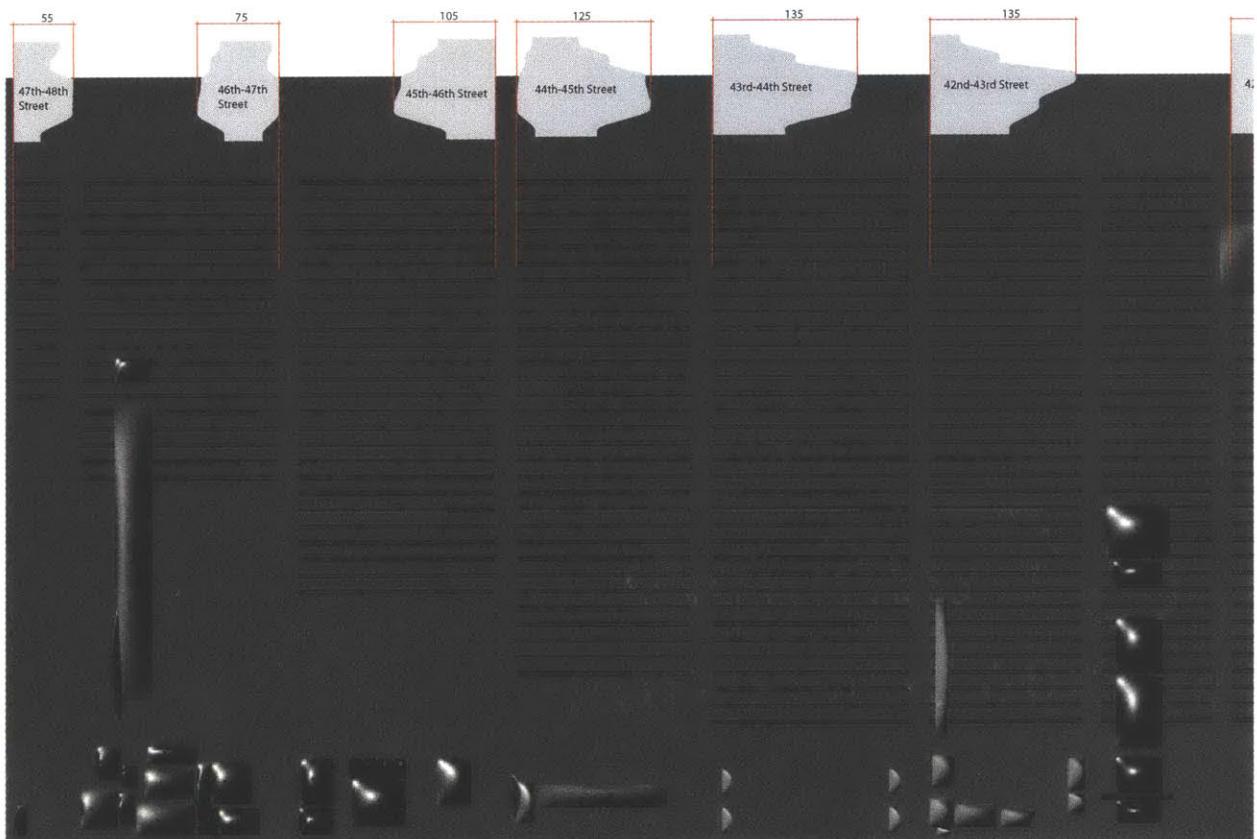
The Times Square Imago is a void for image: it is an eruption of the architectural logics of display that have given form to Times Square. Its architecture is not blanketed in image but rather plays host to image. It exposes its cold functionality to the street while concealing the comforting, warm seduction of brilliant color and sensuous form within. The structure of the building itself is intentionally low-tech; it is essentially a scaffolding for image, an armature for the high-tech mechanisms that animate its interior.

The Imago condenses the experiential qualities of Times Square, a place where people go to look at images, photograph the image-scape, and videotape each other immersed in spectacle. Times Square is a place of spectacle production, regeneration, and proliferation — but this process is one of dispersion. It bleeds images out into the world. The building proposes an increase in the density of this process by visualizing the process itself, as it happens. It is a weight to offset the dispersion of image from the site: a dense core to an already dense landscape. The Imago projects the hope that this intensification can be somehow transformative of our relationship to image. It seeks to embody a cultural condition that is both terrifying and alluring.

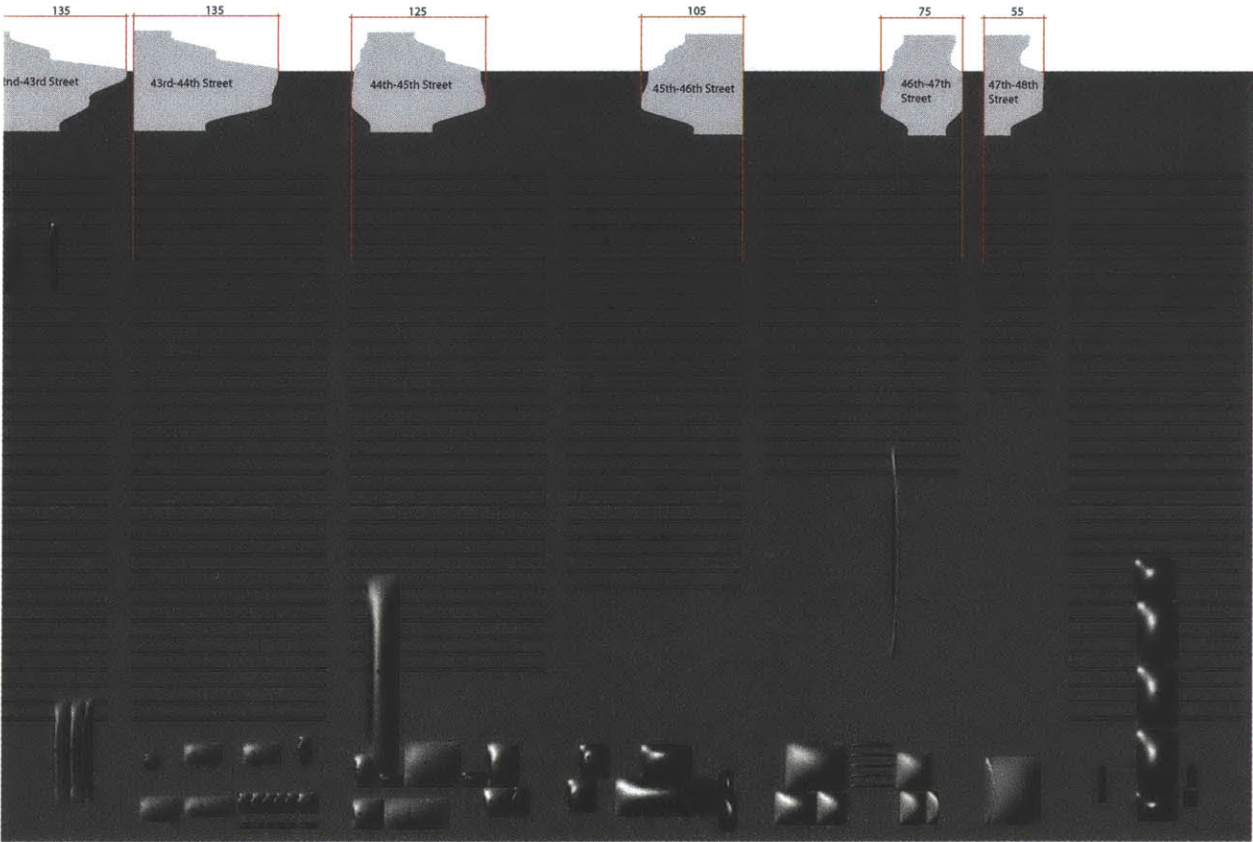


The Times Square Imago is a mechanism for visualization. The function of the building is the production and maintenance of the image which is continuously regenerated on its interior, and the providence of inhabitation of this image. The facade of the building is textured by imprints of the sources of the information that it gathers. The bulging frames mark the locations of the surrounding billboard frames projected onto the building surface. At the center of these frames are cameras which continuously record their source images. The grooves on the facade contain moving cameras which track pedestrians on the street. These grooves are organized according to the blocks toward which the cameras are directed. The number of cameras per block area is determined by the average daily maximum flow of pedestrians across that block. The exact, moment-by-moment pedestrian flow is measured by a single camera trained on each block, located above the top groove of each column.

The facade is black — it absorbs light, pilfers image from the exterior and reproduces it in recombination, metamorphosed, on its interior. It is composed of rigid plastic panels which can be easily installed and removed from the building frame, allowing the facade to transform with the landscape that it monitors. The building does not measure the site in any form that is exactly legible, yet it is marked by the site, its esoteric standards of measurement requiring visible physical analogs. It is the infrastructure through which bodies access the infostructure, and as such its maintenance is of primary concern. In fact, the entire building, as a scaffolding for image which is dependent on its surroundings, can easily be made taller or shorter in order to encompass a shift in the overall intensity of the visual field of Times Square.



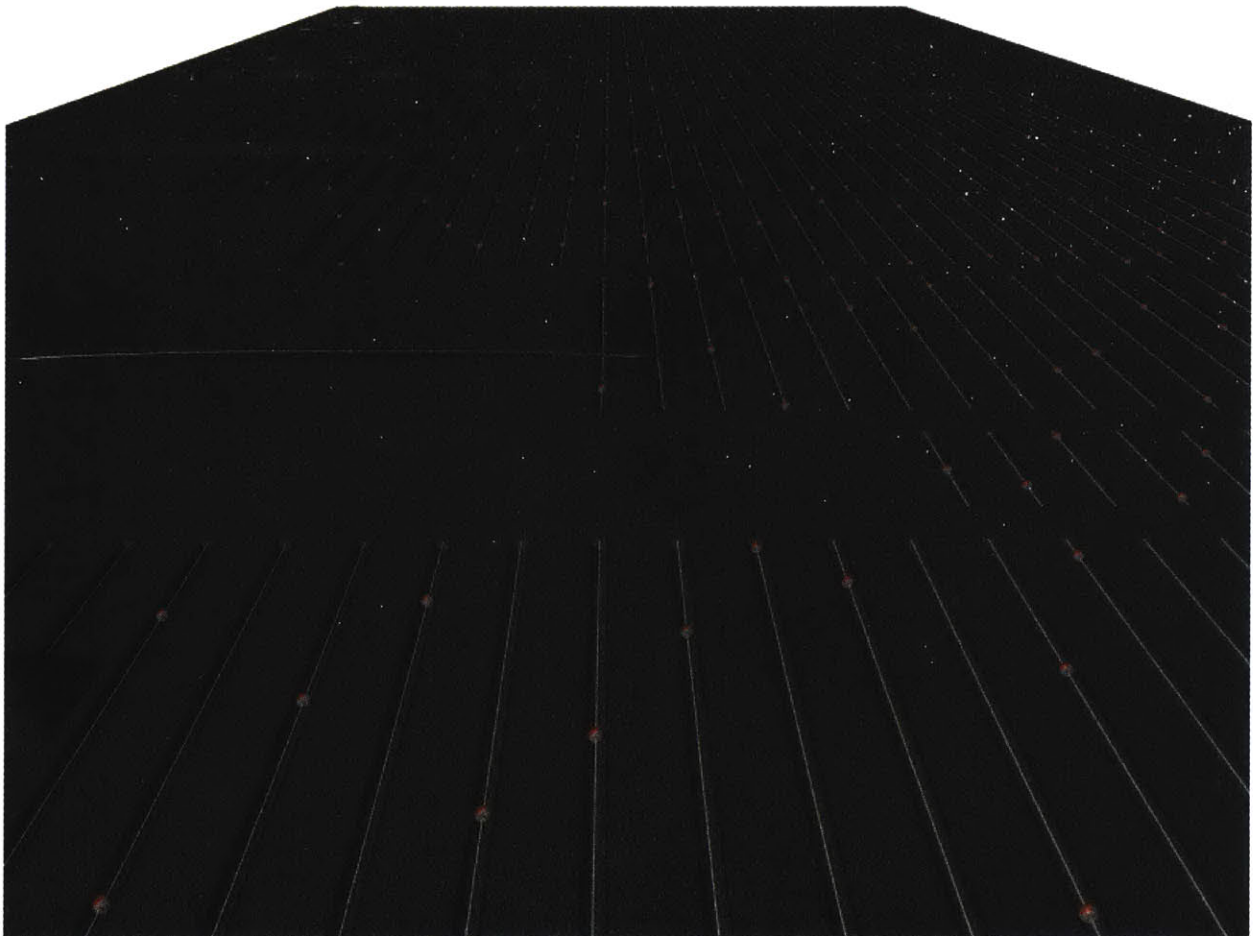
Unfolded Facade Showing Pedestrian Flow Charts



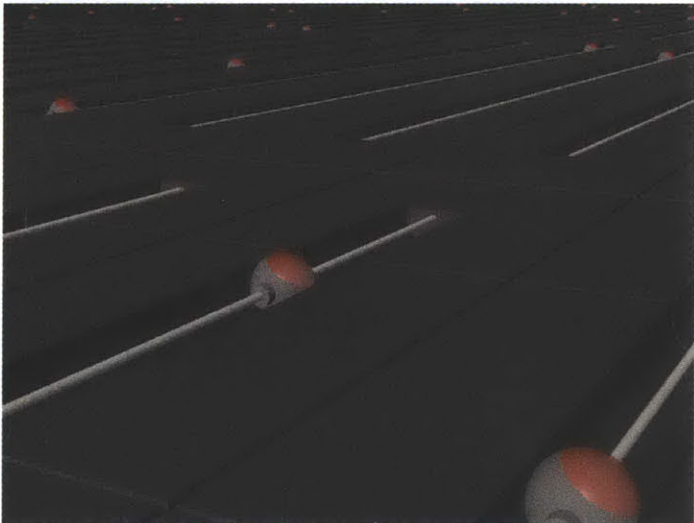
Unfolded Facade: Perspective

"I'll suggest that the sublime is nowadays a technological sublime—a product of reason that is out of control and has in practice replaced its own ground with one of its own making, Heidegger's nightmare..."

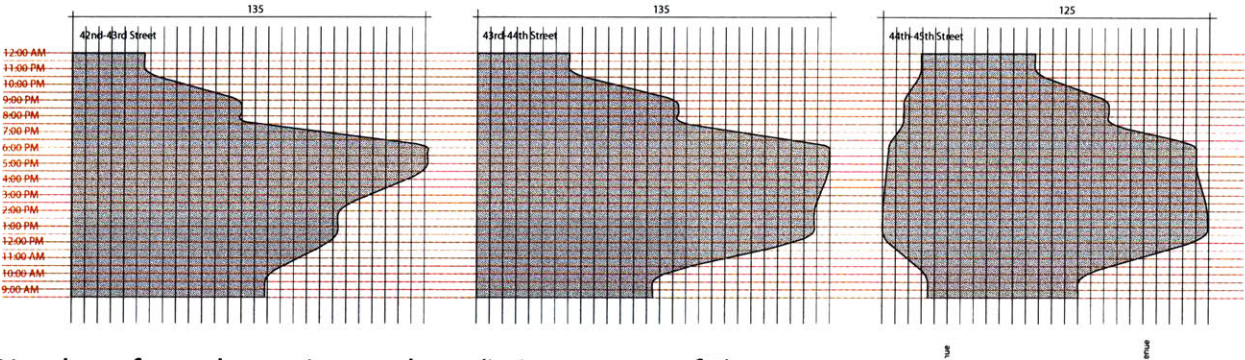
- Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe: "Beauty and the Contemporary Sublime," 40



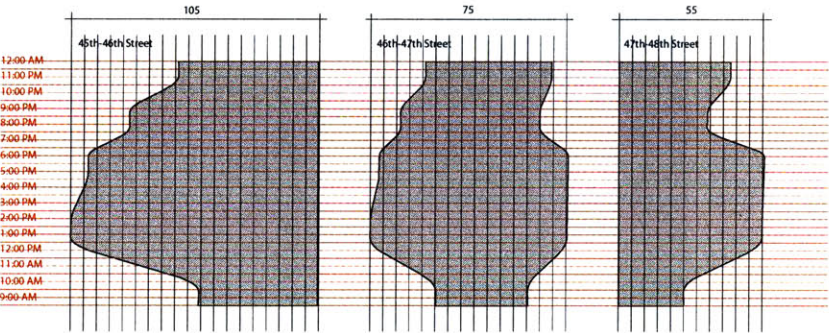
Facade Details



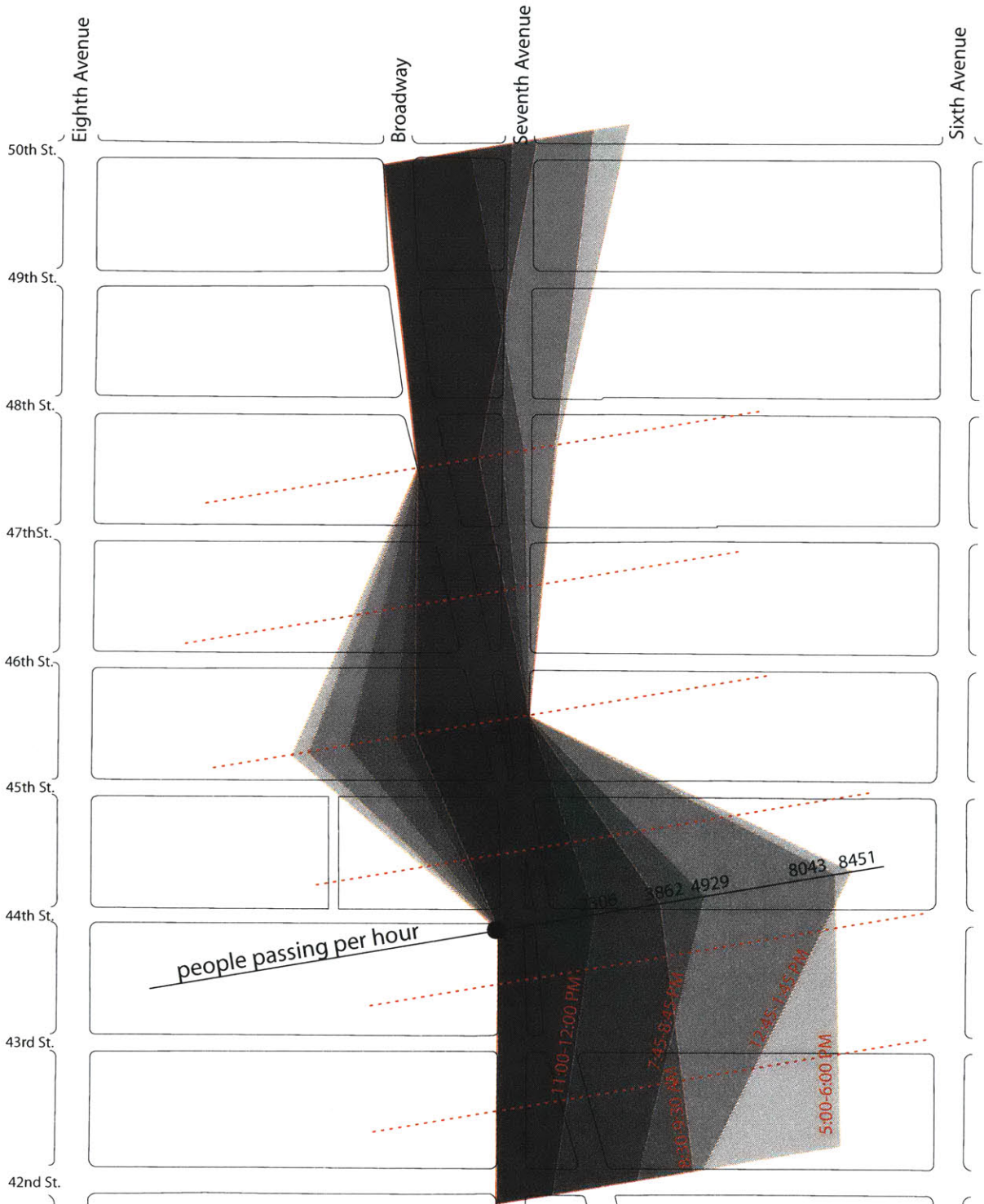
Pedestrian Flow through Times Square



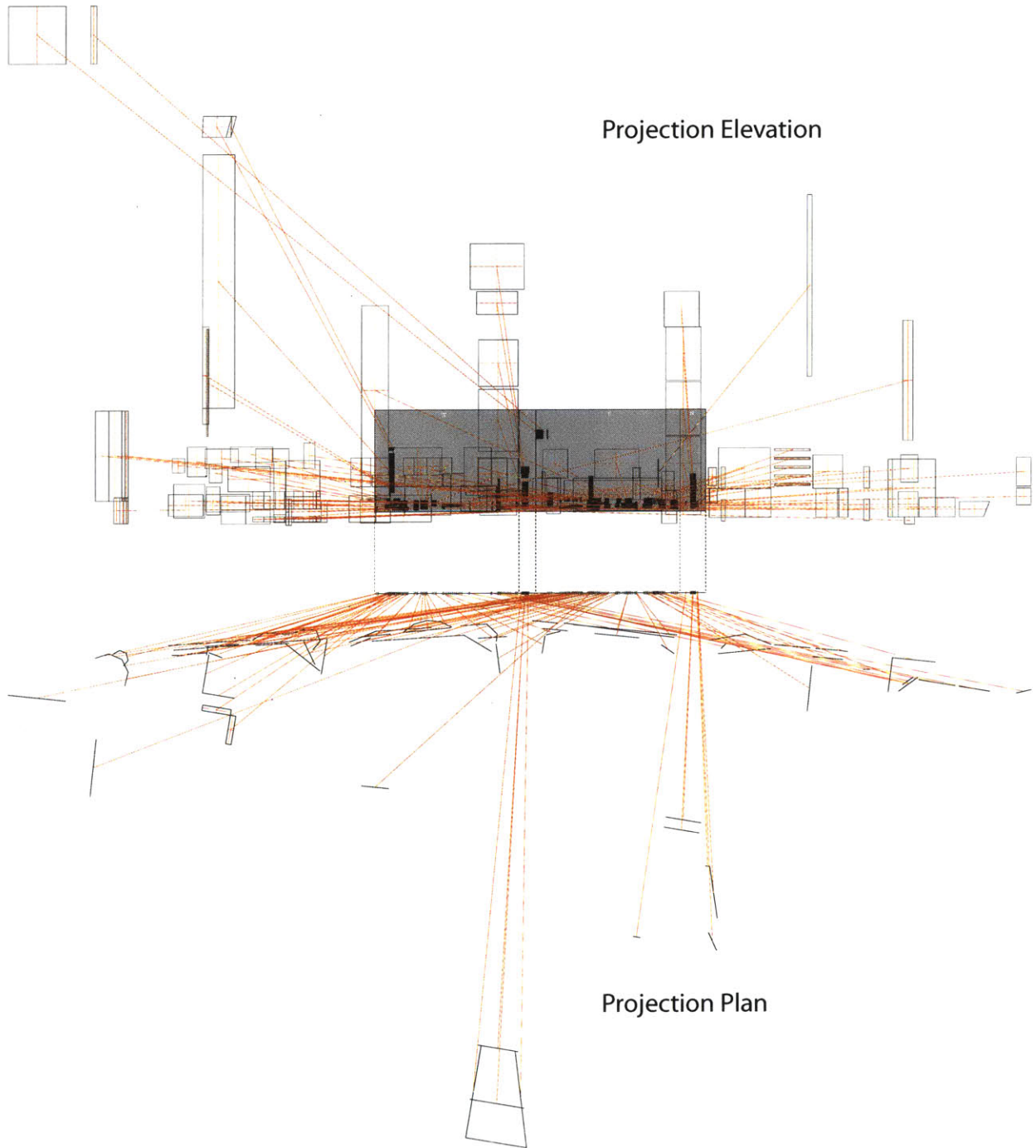
Number of people passing per hour (in increments of 5)



Pedestrian Flow through Times Square



Unfolded Facade Showing Projections to Surrounding Image-scape



Projection Detail

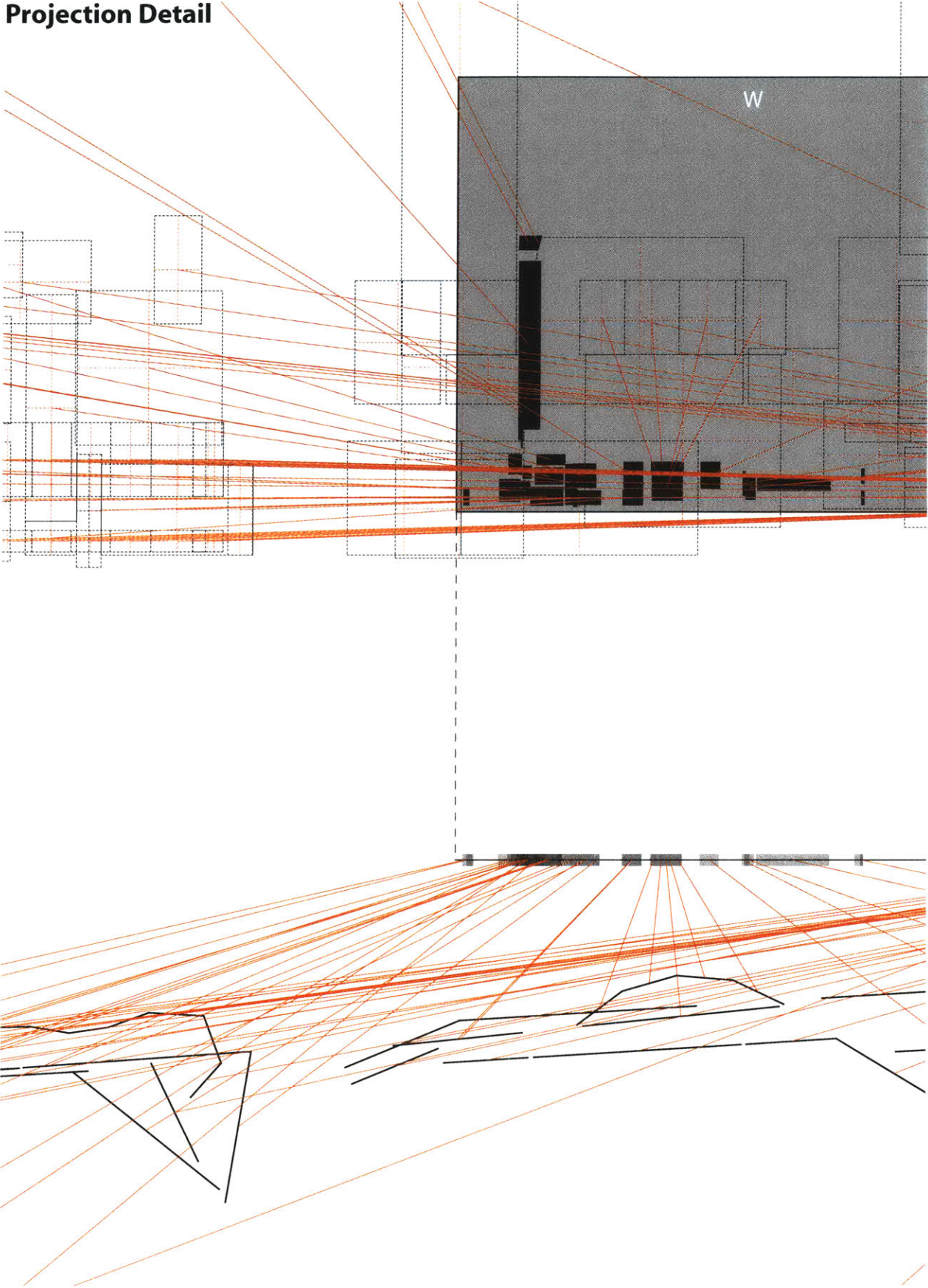
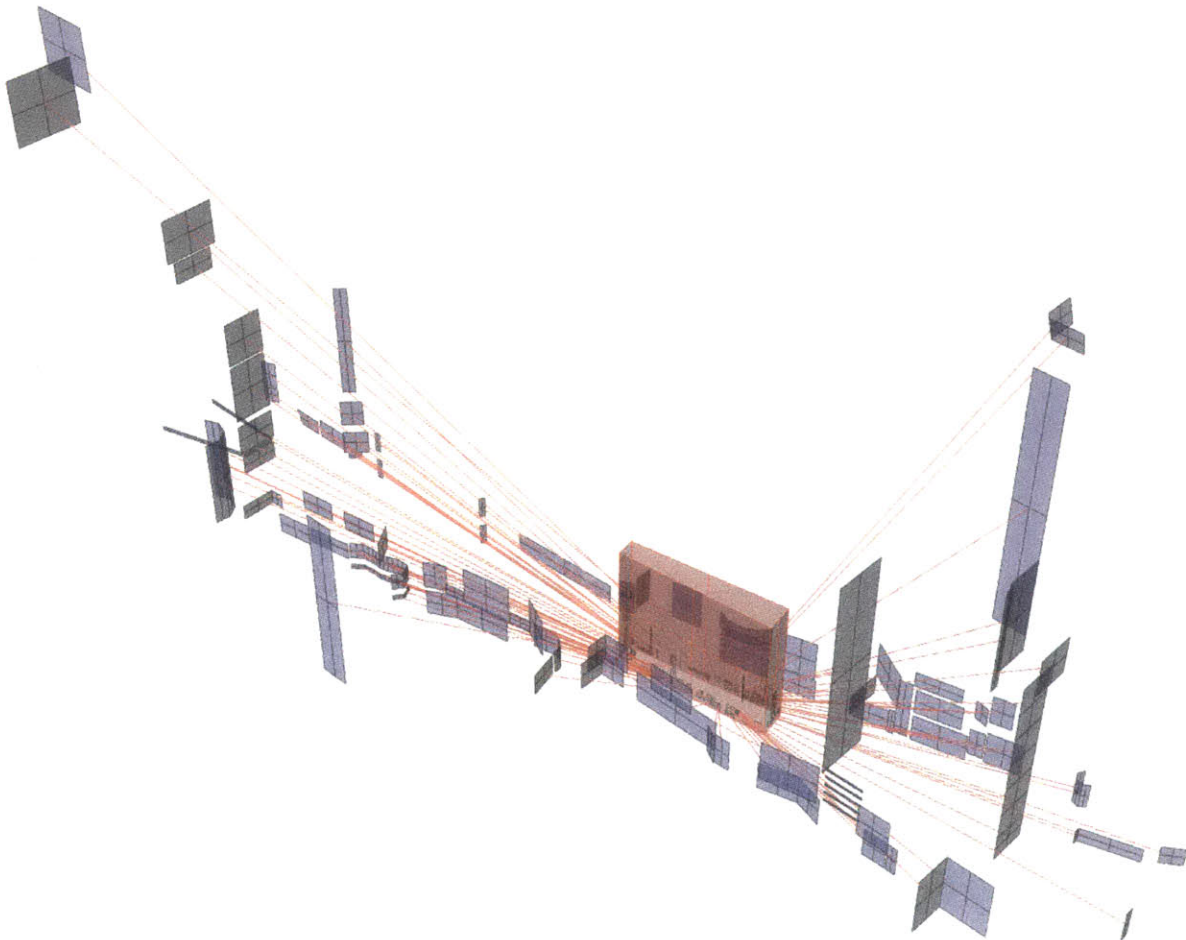


Image--scape Projected onto the Facade: Renders of Digital Simulation

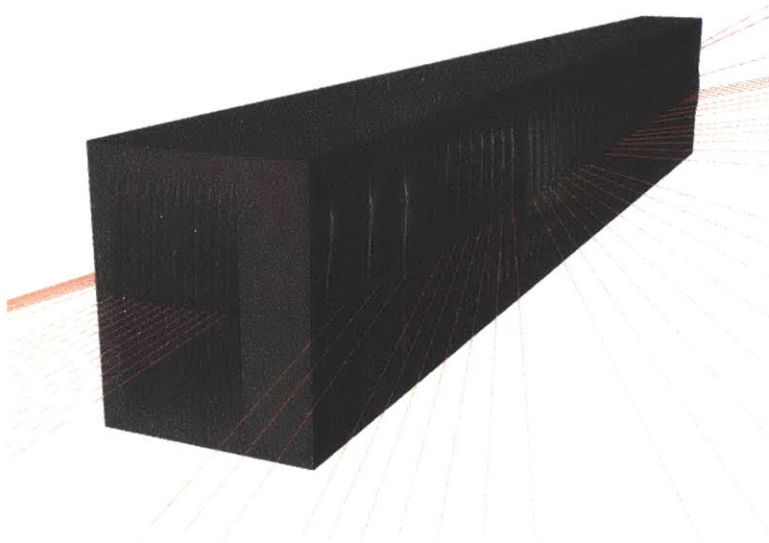


Man does not end with the limits of his body or the area comprising his immediate activity. Rather is the range of the person constituted by the sum of effects emanating from him temporally and spatially. In the same way, a city consists of its total effects which extend beyond its immediate confines."

-Georg Simmel: "The Metropolis and Mental Life"



While the facade monitors the visible landscape — the physical infrastructure of images and the flow of people through the streets — the building's only interior space, the control room, monitors the invisible landscape. This is the network of financial transactions that lies behind the image, the exchange of consumables which is the subject and object of the exterior spectacle of advertising. The financial transaction is textured by the same auxiliary information as is the image itself: marketing demographics. This information is attached to credit cards and is often unknowingly distributed by the parent company. The control room of the Times Square Imago gathers demographic information from credit card transactions in its immediate vicinity. This information, combined with that gathered by the facade, produces the interior image of the visual field. Like the outer facade, the surface of the control room walls is affected by the locations that it monitors. Each business is represented on its surface as an inflected panel, marking its orientation relative to the position of the control room.



Control Room Renderings

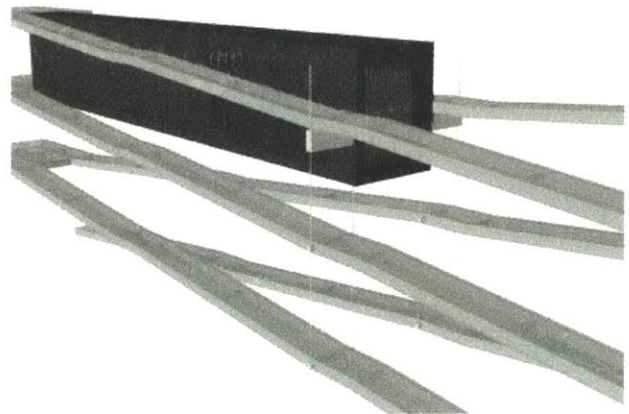
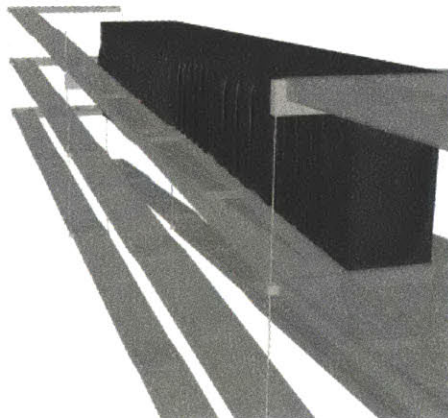
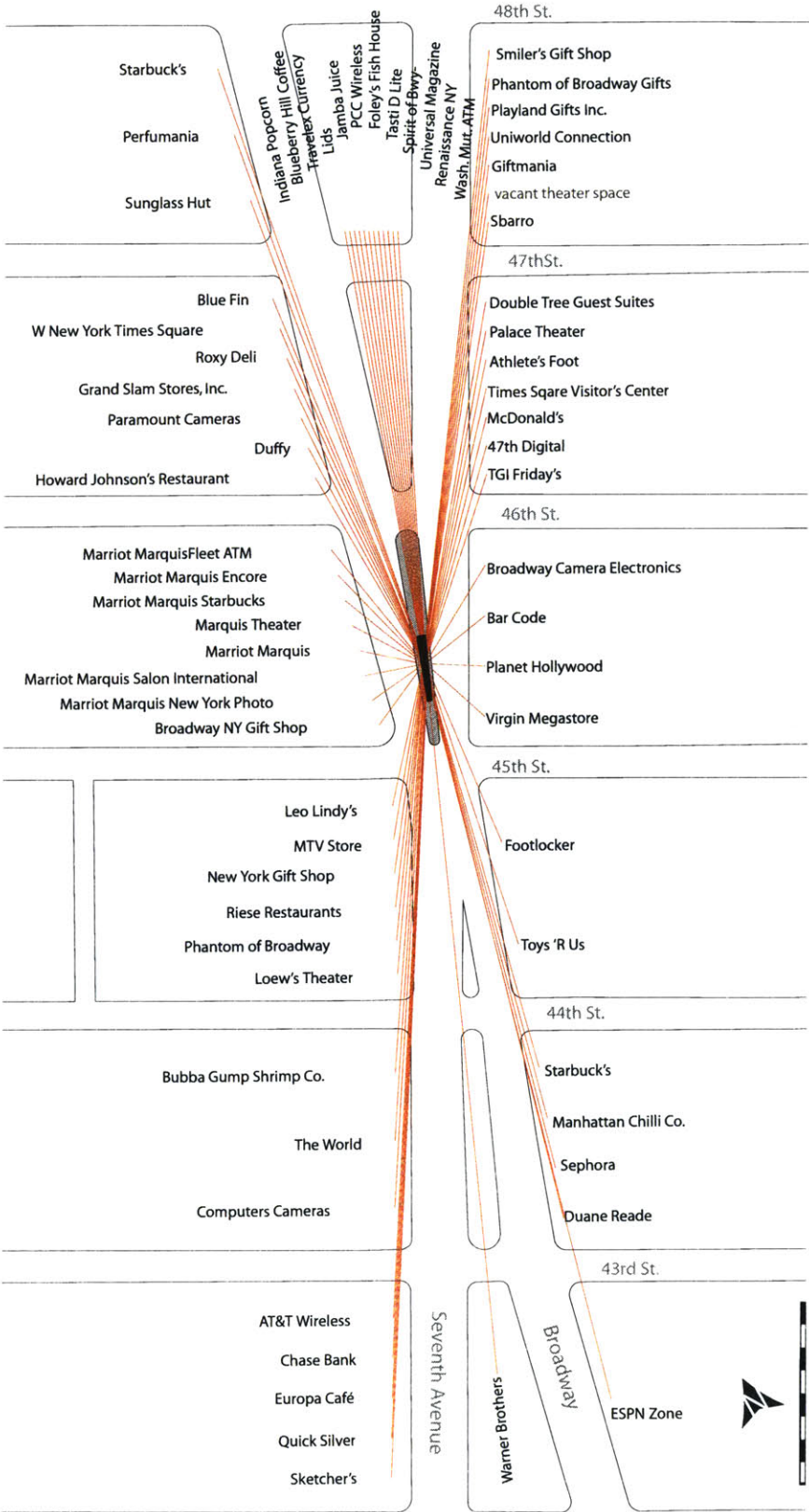


Diagram Calibrating Inflections of Control Room Toward Source Businesses



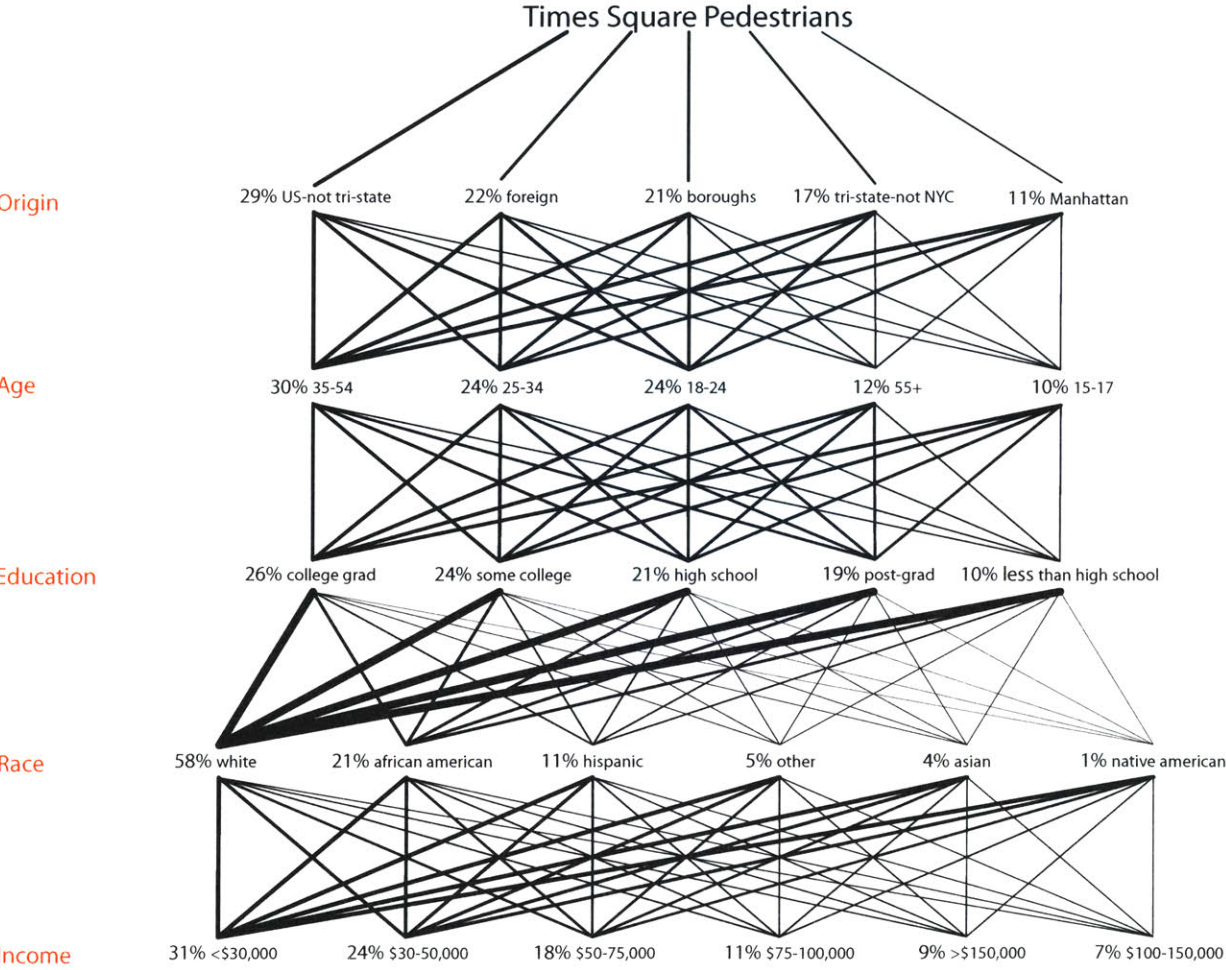
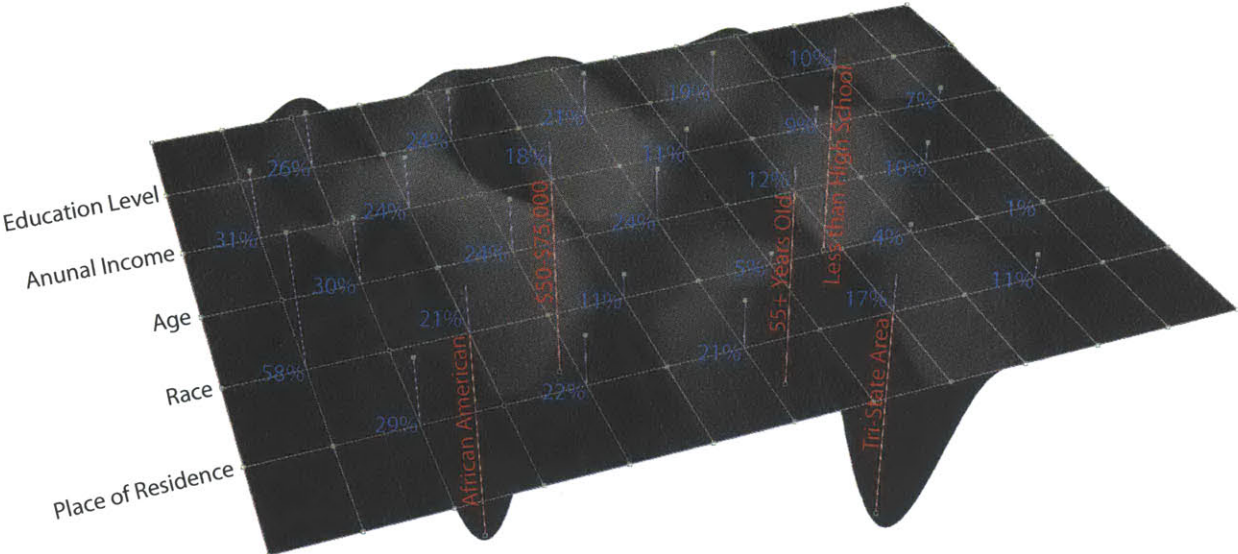
Tremendous complexity is generated from a few simple categories of demographic data. To produce the virtual site that is visualized by the building, I selected a representative set of demographic information culled from the pedestrian surveys shown in the previous section. This data is visualized in multiple ways to draw out the patterning of its internal relations. Each different representation of the data retains graphically all of the categories of the original information scaled proportionally to its percentage: the generic condition. However, each representation also contains the potential for all unique conditions, all possible permutations of this data.

In the logic of the visualization, scale and position are determined by the interrelation of pedestrians and images, color by the images themselves, and texture by the demographic information. Therefore the demographic information first represented in line drawings is translated into a language of surface. The surface, like the line representations, is produced generically by all potential categories and individuated through the emphasis of those which designate the specific instance. Thus each surface is a representation both of the categories of measurement and of those particular statistics which describe the individual. Every credit card usage instantaneously produces a surface which is mapped in real-time into the interior image. These surfaces are human-analogs, representations of people as they are "seen" by the image. The data is not reduced to a simple majority audience, but retained in all of its statistical complexity, producing a limited but still substantial variation.

Perhaps this is a good place to explain the political nature of the Times Square Imago. By implication, the demographic surfaces represent people as a subset of the commodity. This method of texturing the image embeds political commentary within the image: a commentary on the notion of free choice within a given set of options, a theoretical formulation which concerns the limits of freedom in a capitalist society. This is not necessarily a negative analysis of capitalism, but it is an intentional inclusion of a certain type of content that references fixed theoretical positions. It is also, I would contend, a condition that cannot be ignored, that is present already in the mode of demographic tabulation that is being represented. The commodification of the individual is therefore not something that is implied by the representation of the information but is implicated by the very structure of the information itself.

In the final appearance of the Imago, however, this political content is illegible. **The political position of the building is immanent in its process, in its selection of sources. Yet, like the human intentions that shape the landscape to which the building responds, the Imago's position is coded, buried within its form, embodied but not explained.** The Imago seeks to bring about an intensification of existing conditions with the hope that these conditions are made more visible, their inherent problems exposed. This intensification, while it does not assume a fixed position in regard to its content, is not apolitical. The Imago digests its content, makes it integral to its form, embodies it in effect. **It seeks to project those issues which are embedded in its architecture beyond the realm of the intellect and into the purview of sensation. This is a politics of the visceral.**

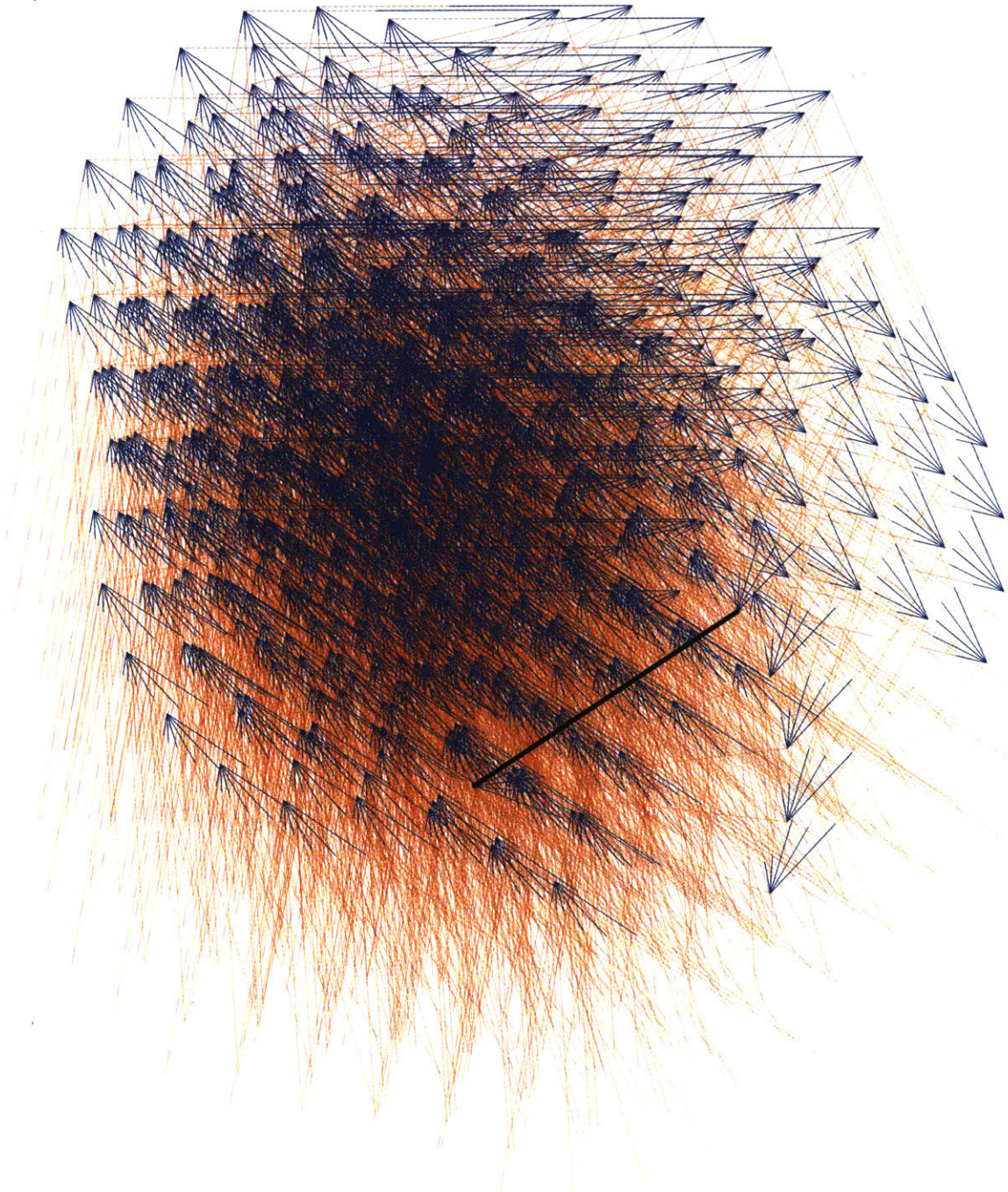
Line and Surface-based Representations of Demographic Data



Total Demographic Permutations: $5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 6 \times 6 = 4500$

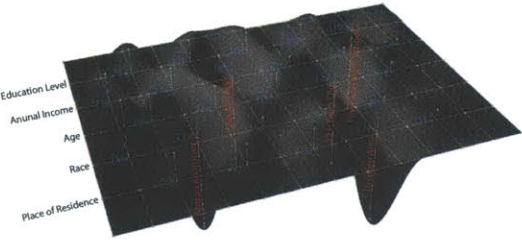
Radial Branching Diagram of Total Permutations of Data

This representation, using the same data that is shown on the previous page, is generated out of lines arrayed at twenty-seven equal measurements of 360 degrees (there are 27 total categories in the data). The red lines are scaled to 100%; they represent a category that has been selected to describe an individual. Connecting five red lines end-to-end would therefore describe an individual within this data set. The blue lines are scaled to the different percentages that describe how the various categories relate to the total population. Thus, at every possible branching of the data, the diagram describes both the individual and the generic case.



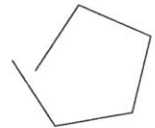
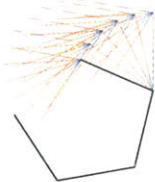
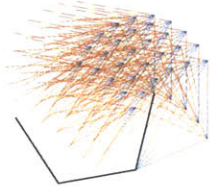
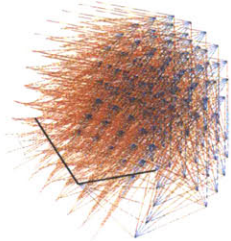
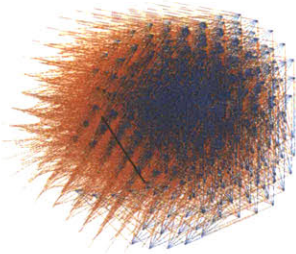
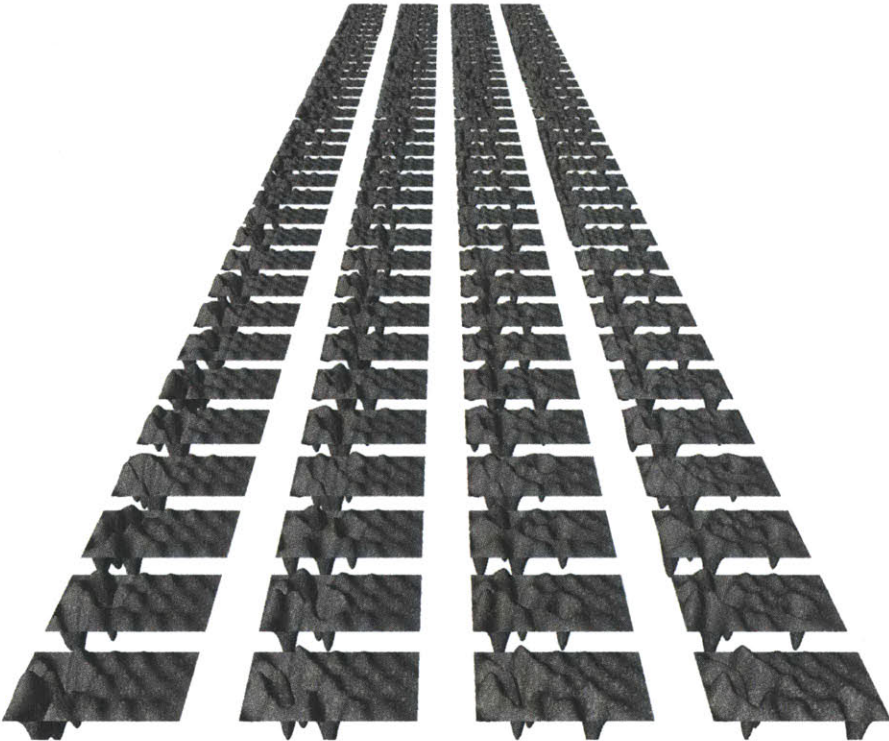
Radial Branching Diagram Showing Individuation

As each category is fulfilled with a certain path chosen, the diagram simplifies exponentially. This sequence shows the process of individuation within this representational system.



Permutations of Surface-based Demographic

In this system, each individual person generates a unique surface that is a variation of the generic condition. The percentages of the different categories produce scaled undulations in the positive y-direction. A category that is selected to describe a particular case inverts the direction of the undulation, producing a negative convexity scaled to 100%.



Representations of the Visual Field

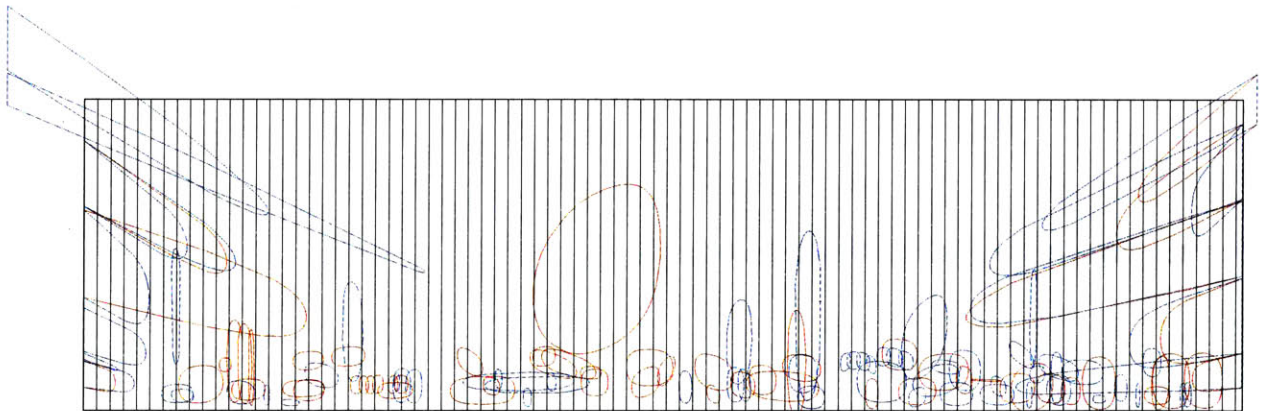
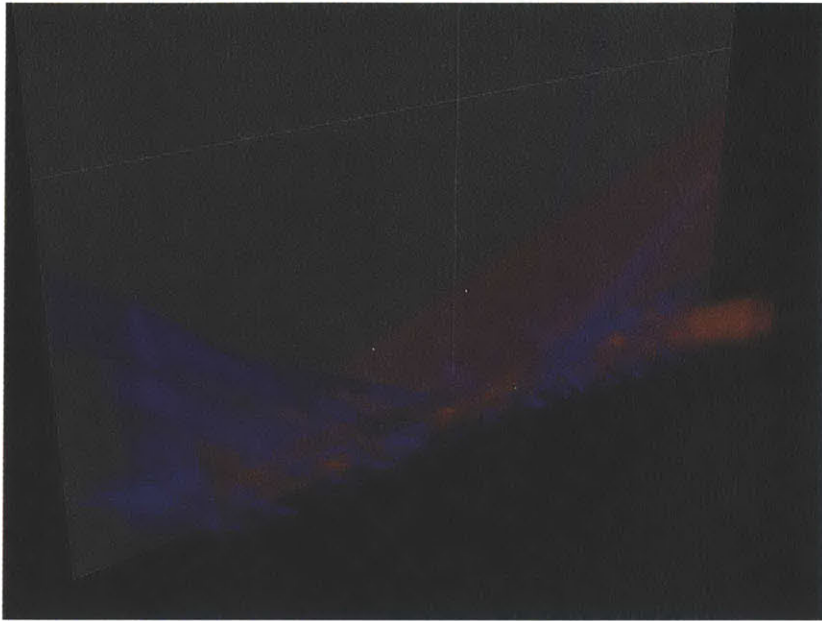


The surface-based demographic from the previous pages is mapped onto a template of overlaid frames which is produced by the physical image-scape. In the actual building, all of this real-time graphical translation of the virtual site is produced continuously through an algorithm. The representations shown here illustrate the process enacted by the algorithm.

The locations of pedestrians on the street are matched to existing billboard frames in the cityscape. These connections are represented as cones of vision. While the locations of the people and the images are actual, the connection produced by the computer is virtual. It is a potential connection, a representation of people looking at images which could never possibly be comprehended in its actuality — it would never be possible to know exactly where all of the hundreds of pedestrians are looking at any given moment. However, by applying a rhythm and a proportional range to the locations of the moving crowd (estimating how many of the people could be looking and for how long), the instantaneous visual field can be produced out of its virtuality.

The building acts virtually as a screen that bisects the bowtie of Times Square. Onto this virtual screen the information of the image field is compressed. It acts as an intersecting plane, capturing the various locations and scales of the visual interrelation and re-presenting them in a condensed field of overlapping frames.

The information contained by this virtual screen is translated to the dimensions of the actual screen within the building. Rectilinear frames are super-scribed around the ovoid shapes produced by the intersection of the vision cones with the image plane. This further compression of the frame-field enhances the falsely spatial qualities of the final image.

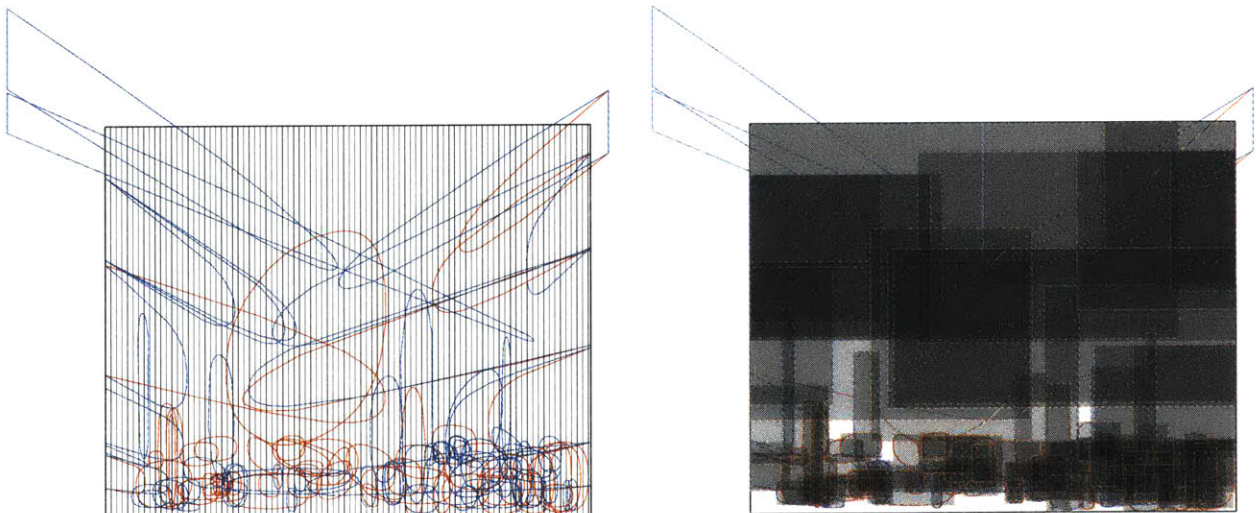


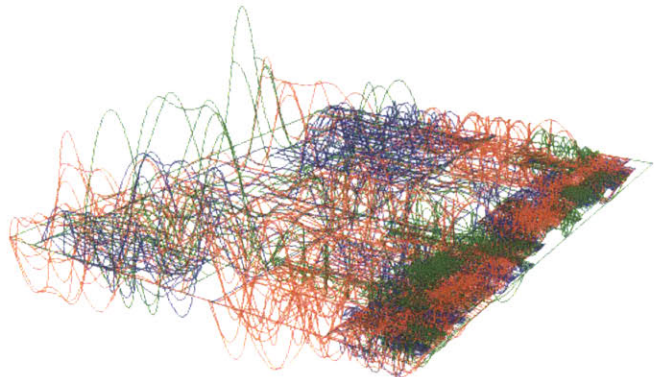
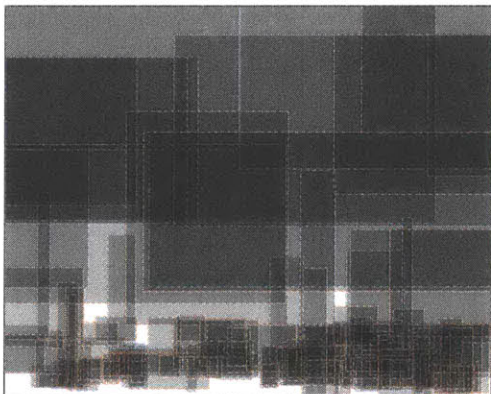
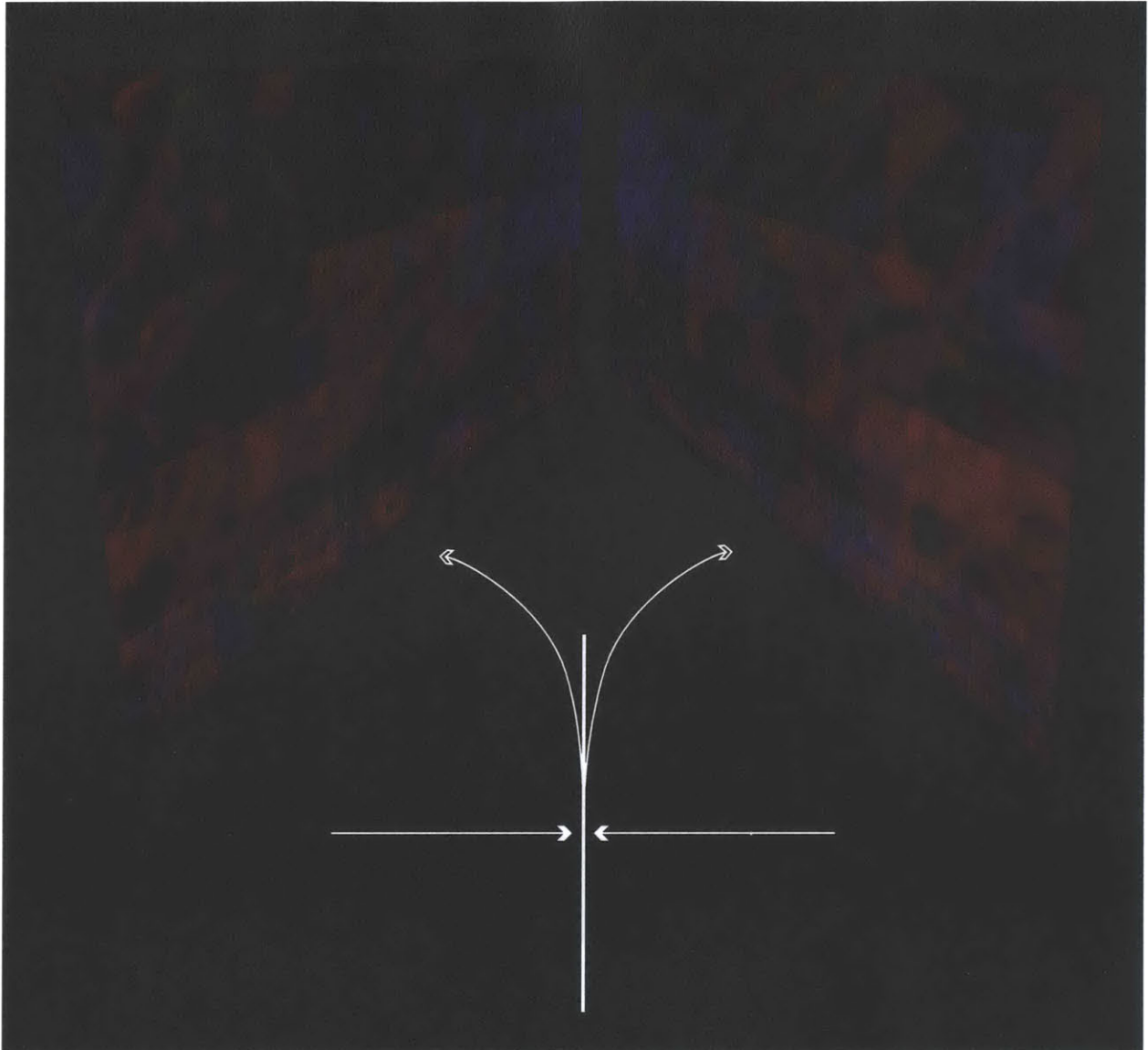
The surface demographic data is mapped onto the frame-field, scaled to fit within the dimensions that it dictates. These surfaces are assigned colors according to the RGB spectrum of the LED screen which will ultimately display the image on the building's interior. The color is determined by the dominant color of the billboard which is the initial object of the vision-cone for each frame. Since there is a depth to the graphic model which generates the image, the image is two-sided. The overlapping frames produce a depth of transparency — the spatiality of the image. **Within the void of the building interior, both sides of this falsely spatial image are visible; conceptually the viewer occupies the two-dimensionality of the image plane. Thus, the viewer is a virtual inhabitant of the image itself, positioned by the image as resident within its two-dimensionality.** The viewer, who has emerged from the actual visual field into this void of virtuality, experiences a collapse of time within the space of the image. The image reduces the visual field of the surrounding territory to pure potential. The immediate past and imminent future of the viewer, encompassing the journey to and from the Imago through Times Square, is variously re-lived and predicted within the non-spatial domain of the virtual image. In being virtually rendered as two-dimensional and outside of time, the viewer experiences her actual corporeality in a profound way.

“But already we may speak of the body as an ever advancing boundary between the future and the past, as a pointed end, which our past is continually driving forward into our future. Whereas my body, taken at a single moment, is but a conductor interposed between the objects which influence it and those on which it acts, it is, nevertheless, when replaced in the flux of time, always situated at the very point where my past expires in a deed.”

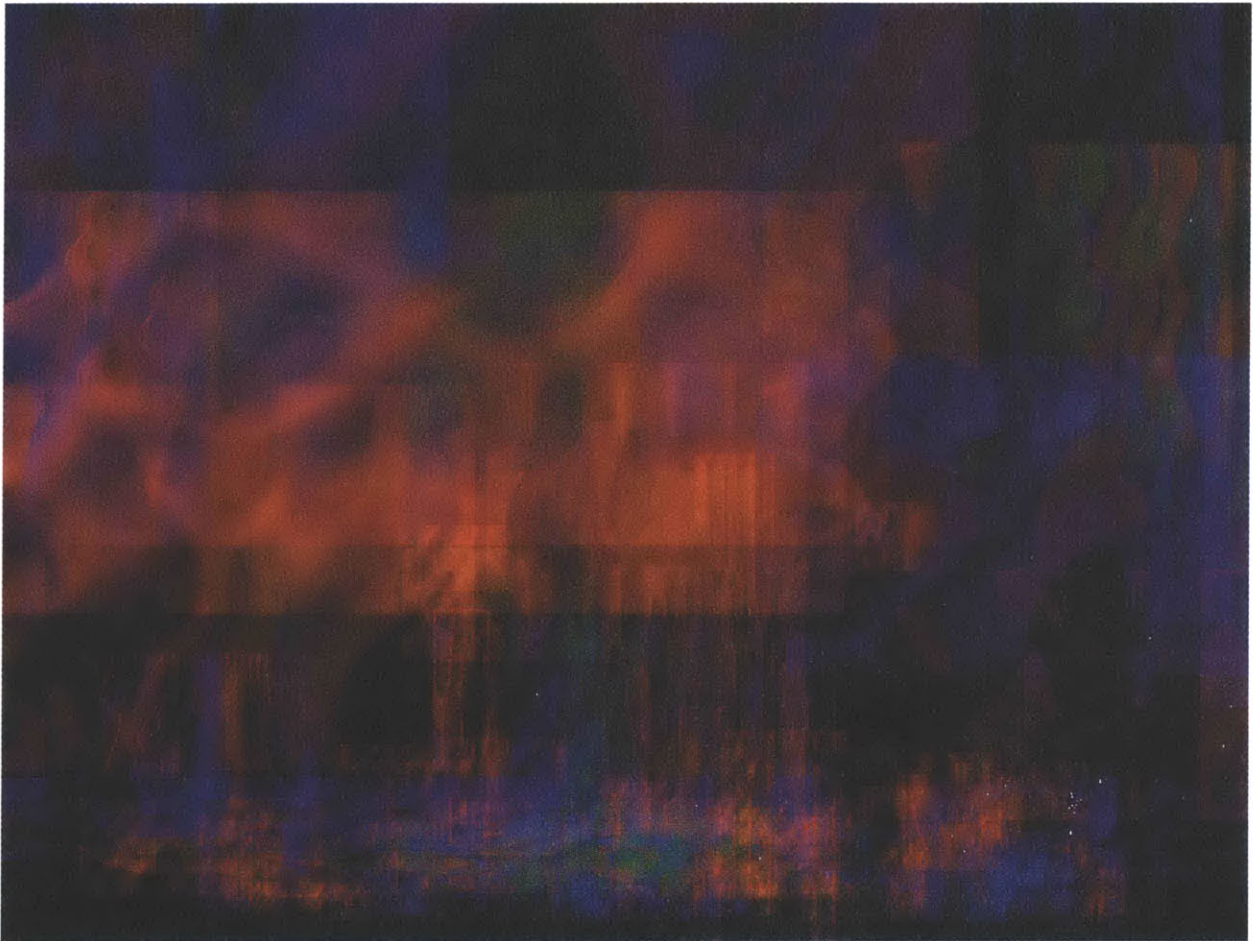
-Henri Bergson: *Matter and Memory*, 78

Development of Frame-Field to Image





Interior Image: Virtual Representation of Visual Field, 6:01:05PM, Front

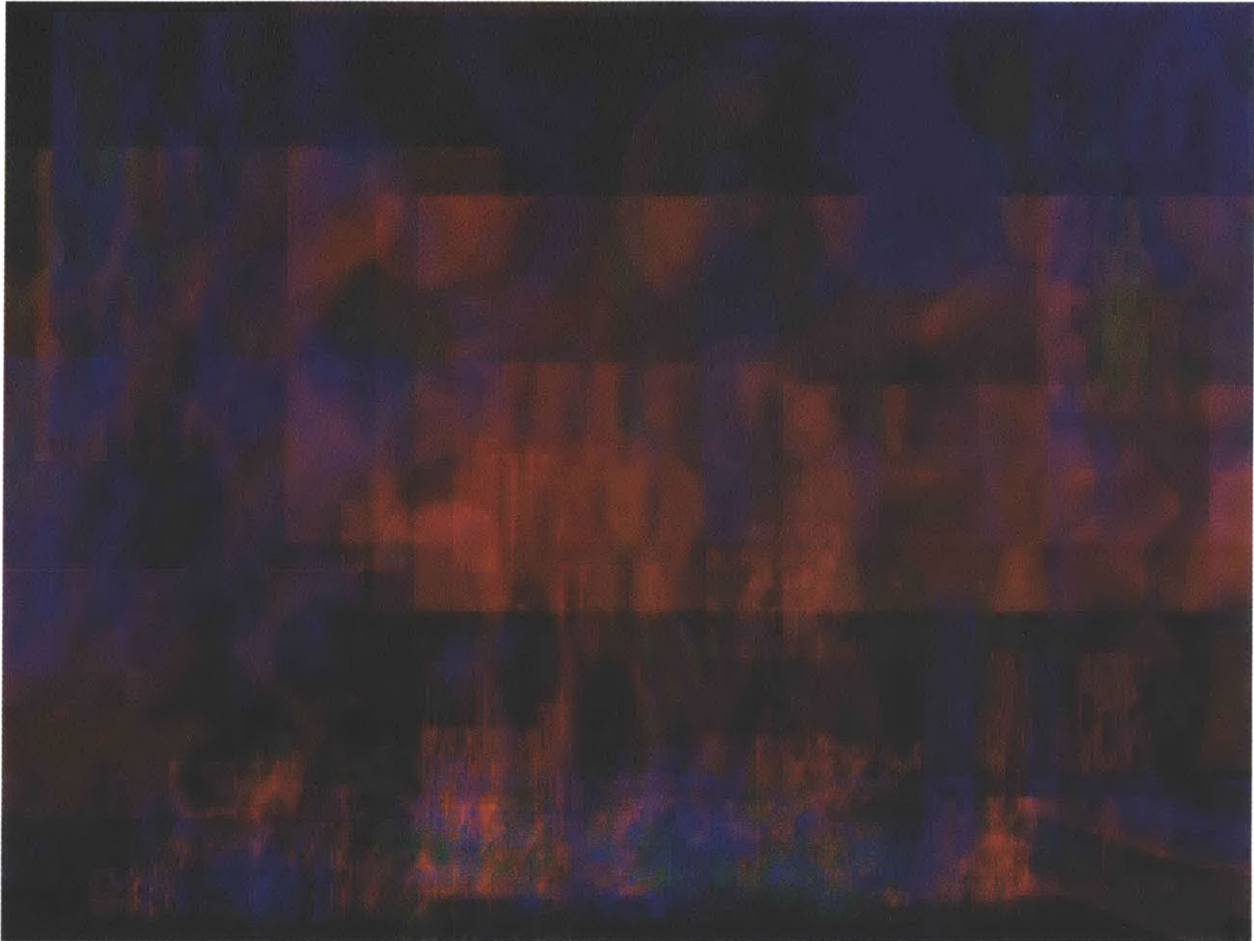


The image is a representation of people looking at images and people purchasing goods in the spaces behind those images. It renews itself, moment by moment, as these activities occur all around at a frenetic pace. A rhythm which becomes embodied in the image. As there is no recognizable content in the image, the subject of its representation may be only this rhythm: time itself.

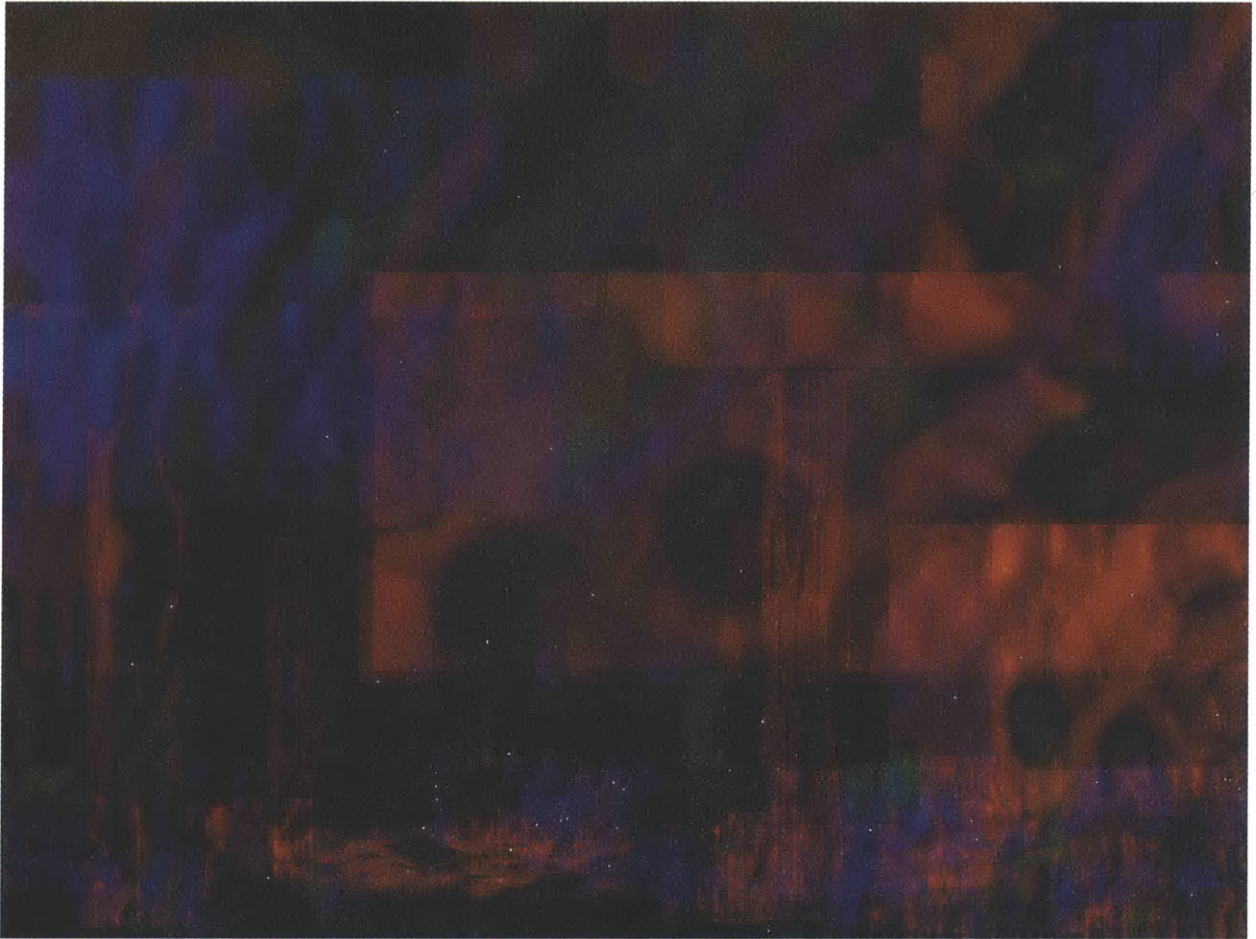
"...My own duration, such as I live it in the impatience of waiting, for example, serves to reveal other durations that beat to other rhythms, that differ in kind from mine. Duration is always the location and the environment of differences in kind; it is even their totality and multiplicity. There are no differences in kind except in duration — while space is nothing other than the location, the environment, the totality of differences in degree."

-Gilles Deleuze: *Bergsonism*, 32

Interior Image: Virtual Representation of Visual Field, 6:01:05PM, Back

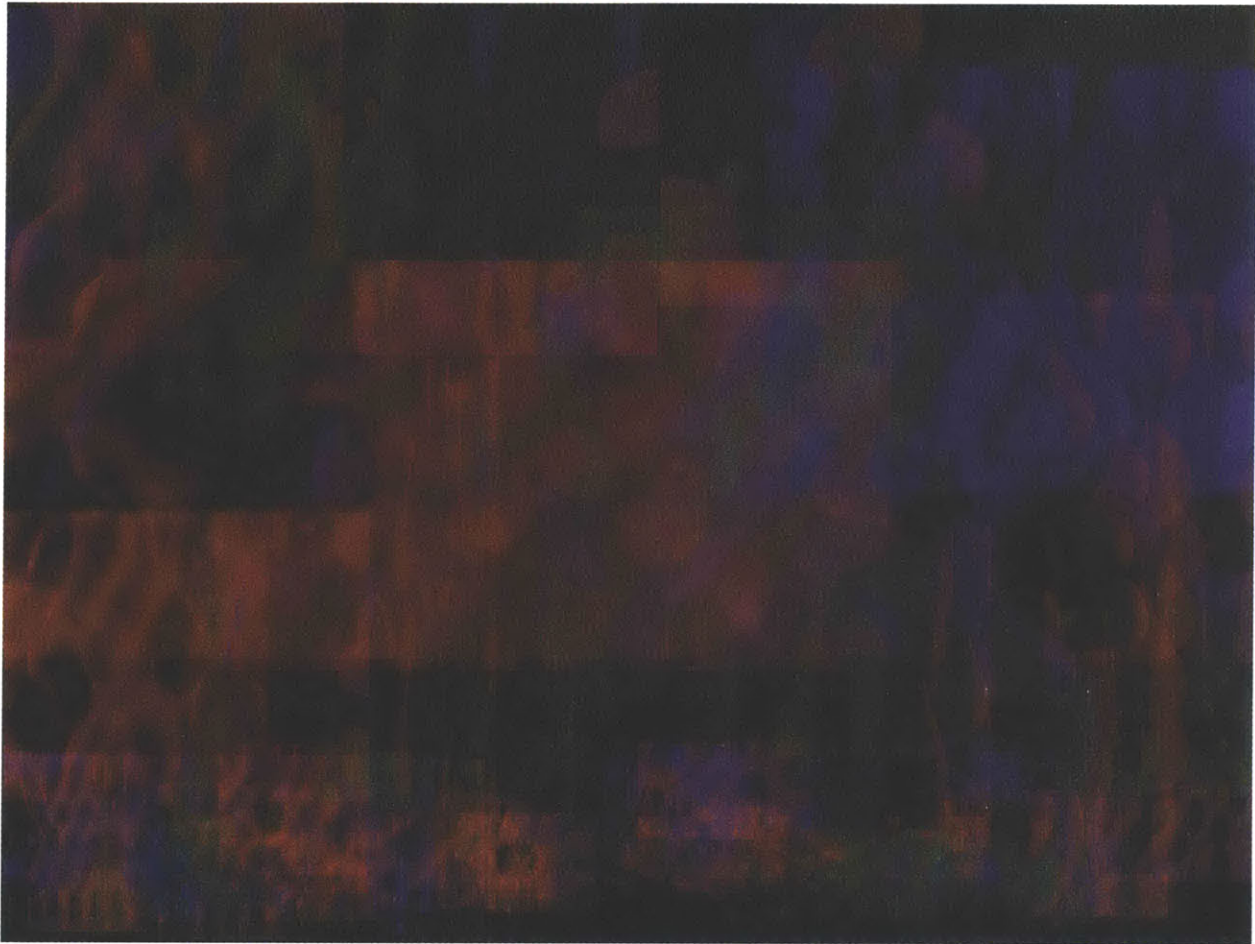


Interior Image: Virtual Representation of Visual Field, 10:14:21AM, Front



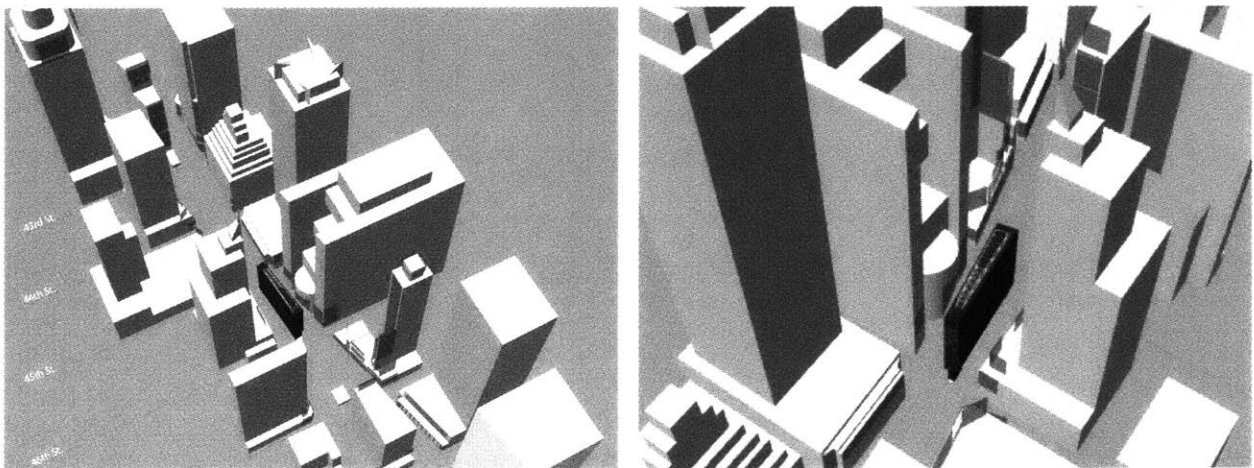
Produced through the same mechanisms of control and observation that determine the image-scape, the same mechanisms that direct consumption, the image appears as pure, seductive form. Yet the visible mechanics of its production — the sinister devices of the building itself and the unsettling manner in which it is occupied — impart a creeping sense of terror to this sensuous image. **If the seemingly menacing mechanisms of the building produce something that is undeniably alluring, yet which is enigmatically concealed within a foreboding shell, then could not that which is so attractive be a veil for an even more sinister process? That this question remains unanswered is perhaps the central ambiguity of the project.**

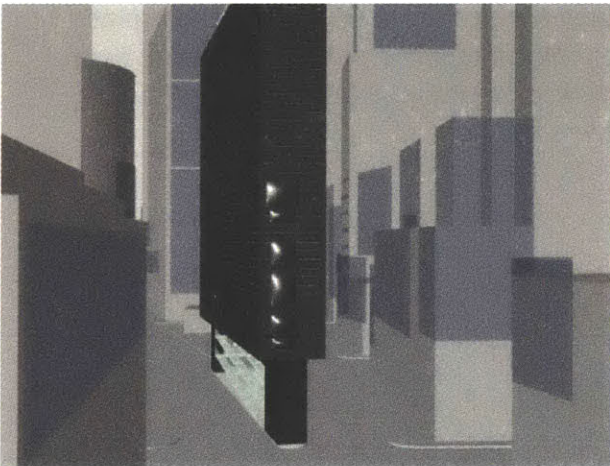
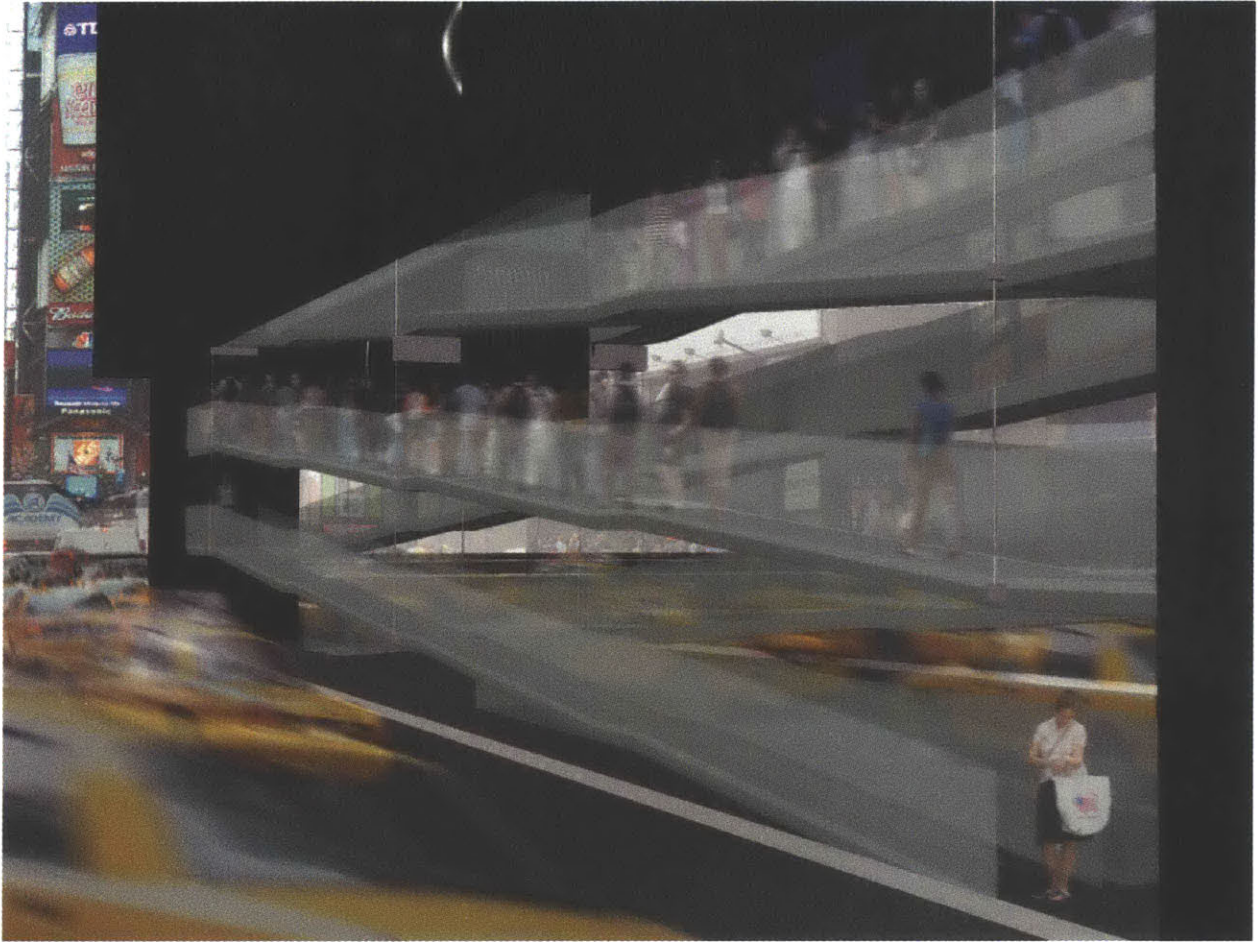
Interior Image: Virtual Representation of Visual Field, 10:14:21AM, Back



Located in the center of Times Square, the Imago can only be accessed by crossing into a sea of traffic at the oblique convergence of Broadway and Seventh Avenue. Waiting at the stop-light, then crossing into the street with a massive crowd, the dark, foreboding building looms overhead. Tiny red eyes glide silently across its surface, forming random groupings which are always in the process of condensing, dispersing, and regrouping. A pattern of strangely inflected panels mars the smooth surface, catching dull bits of light here and there. One must step beneath this massive suspended monolith to access the entry ramp. Climbing the glass-clad entry ramp, one remains immersed in the cityscape, gradually ascending to the elevation generally occupied by large billboards. Glimpses of the softly rippling forms projected by the massive interior LED screen are visible through the gaps between the diagonals of the ramps. Finally, after standing in a crowded line suspended between the street and luminous interior void, one ascends to the waiting platform. From there, the image towers above on all sides, its long, close walls seeming to converge high above. A tiny glass platform is suspended within the depthless light, moving up in short, gentle convulsions that seem to follow the rhythm of the churning forms which blanket the interior. Intermittent gasps and shrieks filter down, mixing with the muffled sound of traffic — distant now. Finally the platform descends, the quiet crowd exits from the opposite end, slowly filtering down the exit ramp.

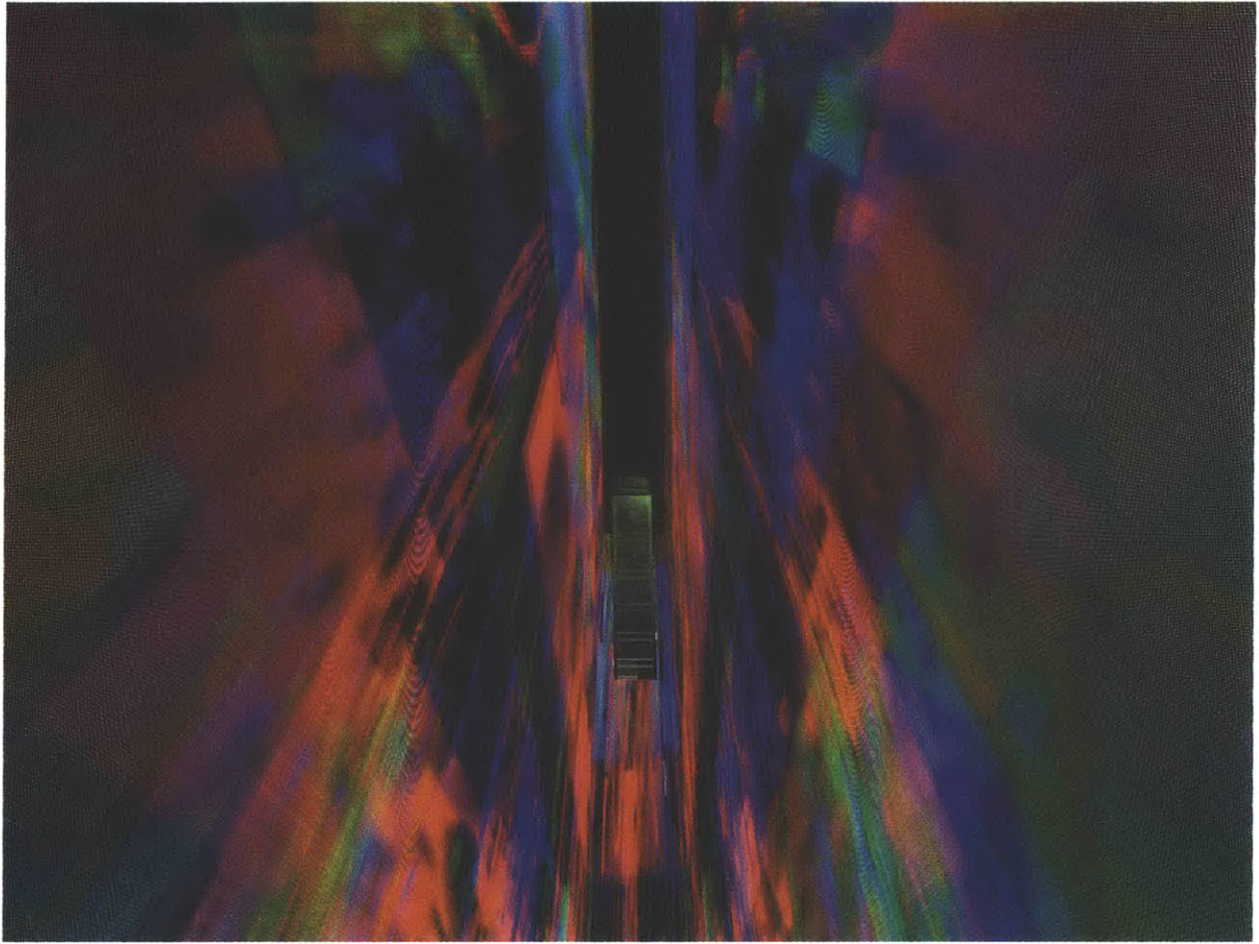
The glass doors to the platform swing in and one boards with a large group. Now one ascends, gradually, at an irregular pace. The heat of all of the compacted bodies mingles with the heat of the colored lights; the space seems close yet limitless. One is enveloped in brilliant, warm light, surrounded in seductively billowing luminous form. The walls themselves begin to lose solidity: like melting steel they appear to warp and bend with the heat of the image that colors their surface. Gradually the crowd quiets; the platform begins to descend; the relentless pulse of the image rushing by, engulfing everything. Swimming in image, one is exhausted, one's senses spent, one's body limp and useless. One anticipates the relief of the crowded street.

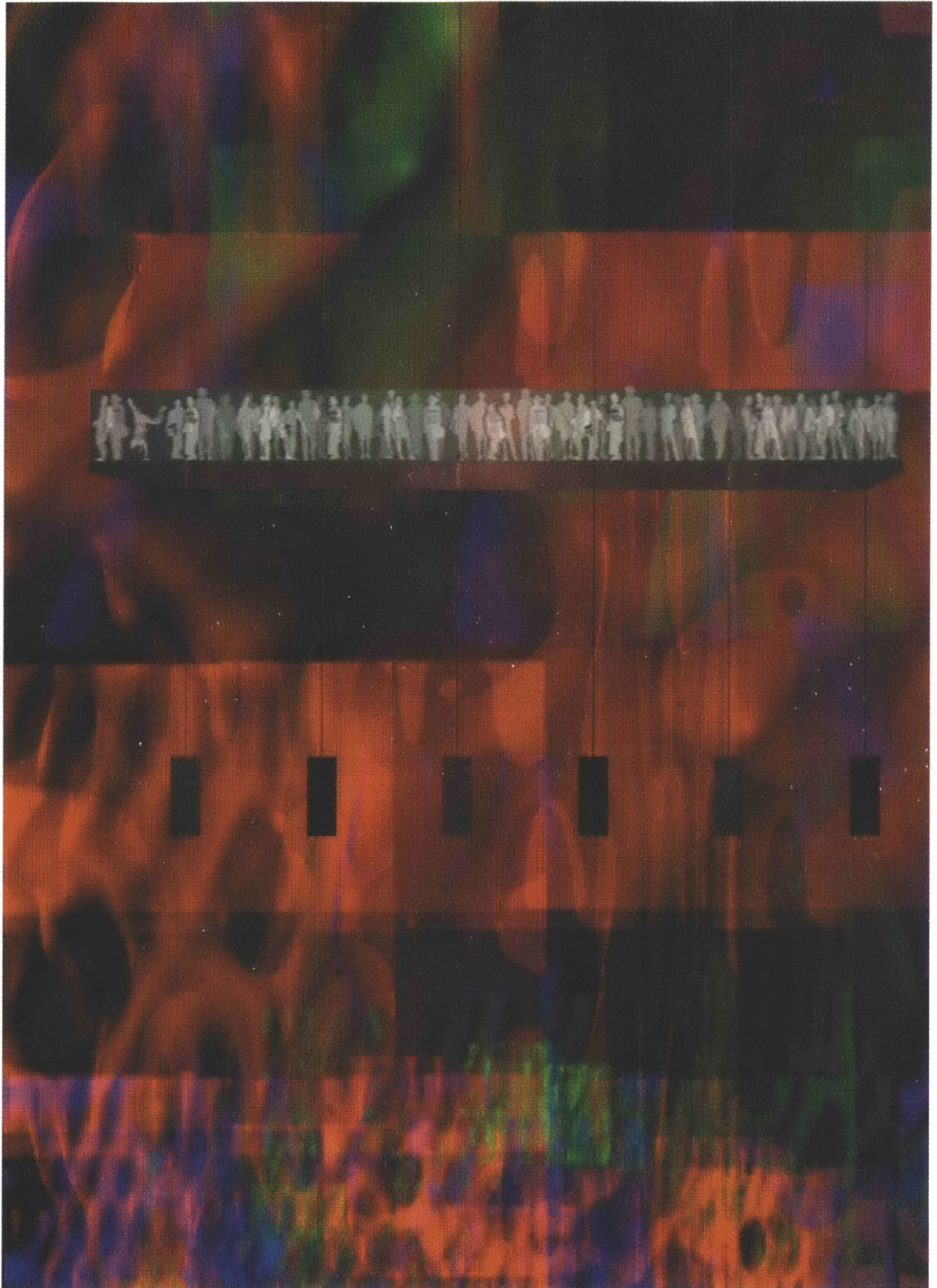






"Today our only architecture is just that: huge screens upon which moving atoms, particles and molecules are refracted. The public stage, the public place have been replaced by a gigantic circulation, ventilation, and ephemeral connecting space."
-Jean Baudrillard, *The Ecstasy of Communication*, 20





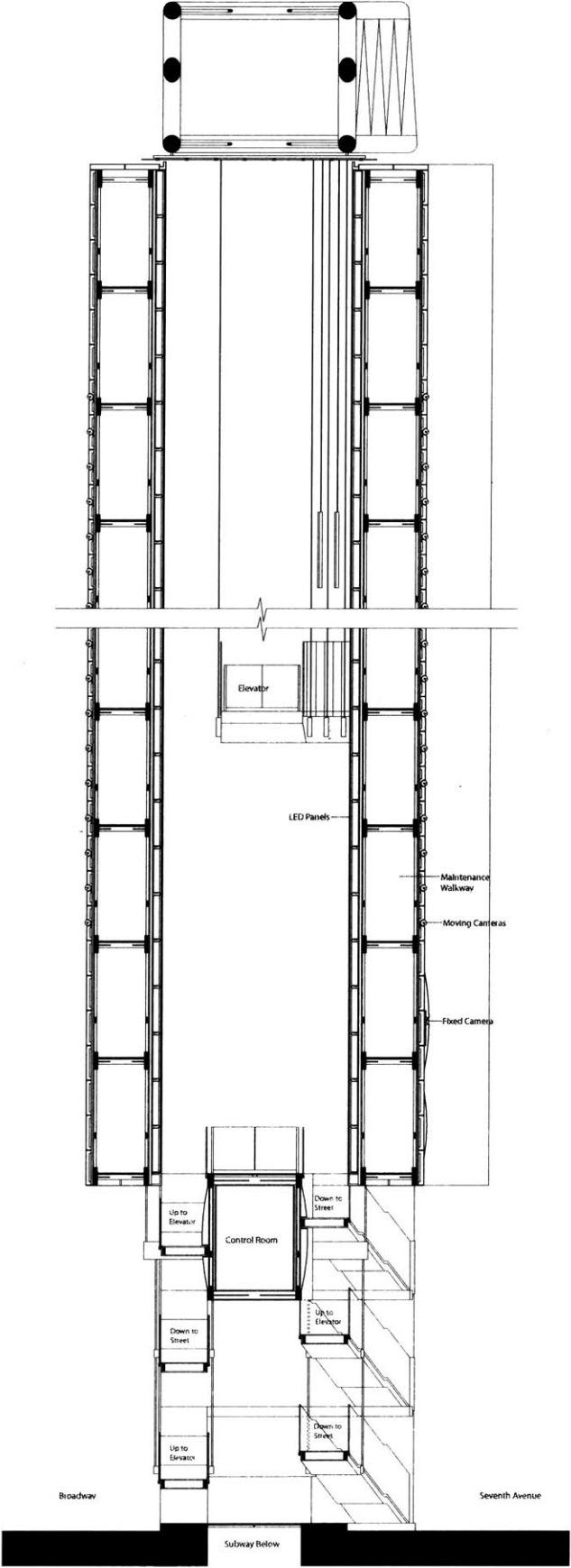




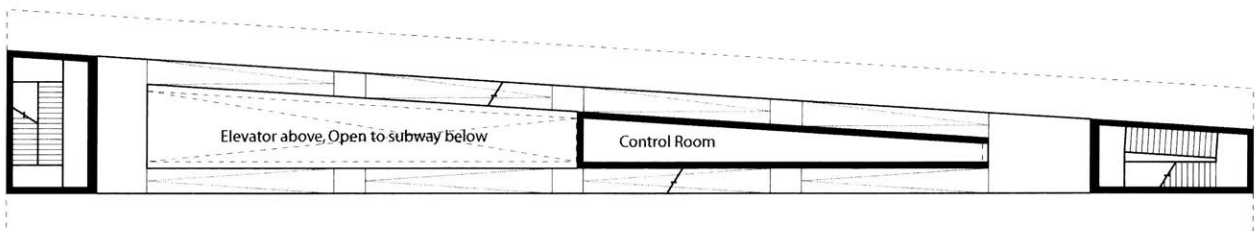
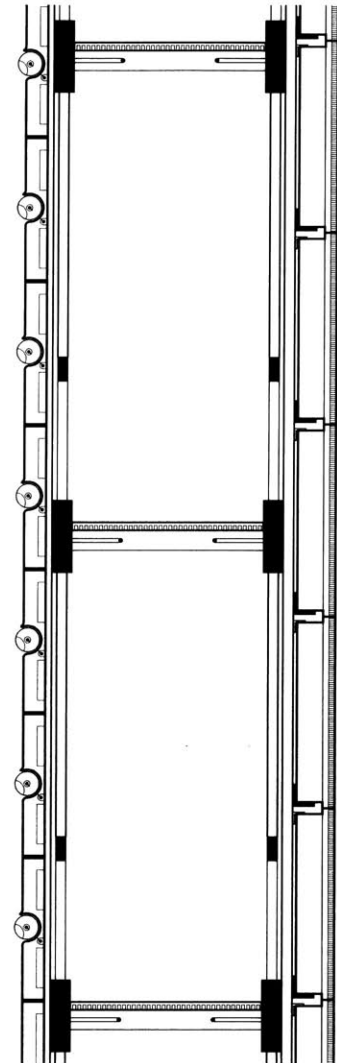
The Imago inverts the economic logics of Times Square. In this site the most valuable leasable space is surface. One Times Square, located at the southern end of the bowtie, recently sold for 120 million dollars despite the fact that it is mostly vacant. Its value is produced almost solely by its billboards. As is typical, the functional requirements of the large, electronic signs which cover the facade render the interior of the building practically useless.

The Imago houses the image in its interior while the exterior is composed of layers of service space. The 50,000 square feet of image surface, which would be the largest LED sign in the world,⁴ maximizes the value potential of the site through surface. This tremendous potential is counteracted by the communality of the image that is produced. In removing institutional control from the presentation surface, the building subverts the economic potential that it embodies. The surface only has value as advertising, as object-image. Thus the interiority of the image space embodies this inversion, transforming what is usually a private surface of the public street into a publicly-generated surface of a private interior.

Section Looking North



Plan and Section Detail





Open to subway below

Moving cameras tracking pedestrians

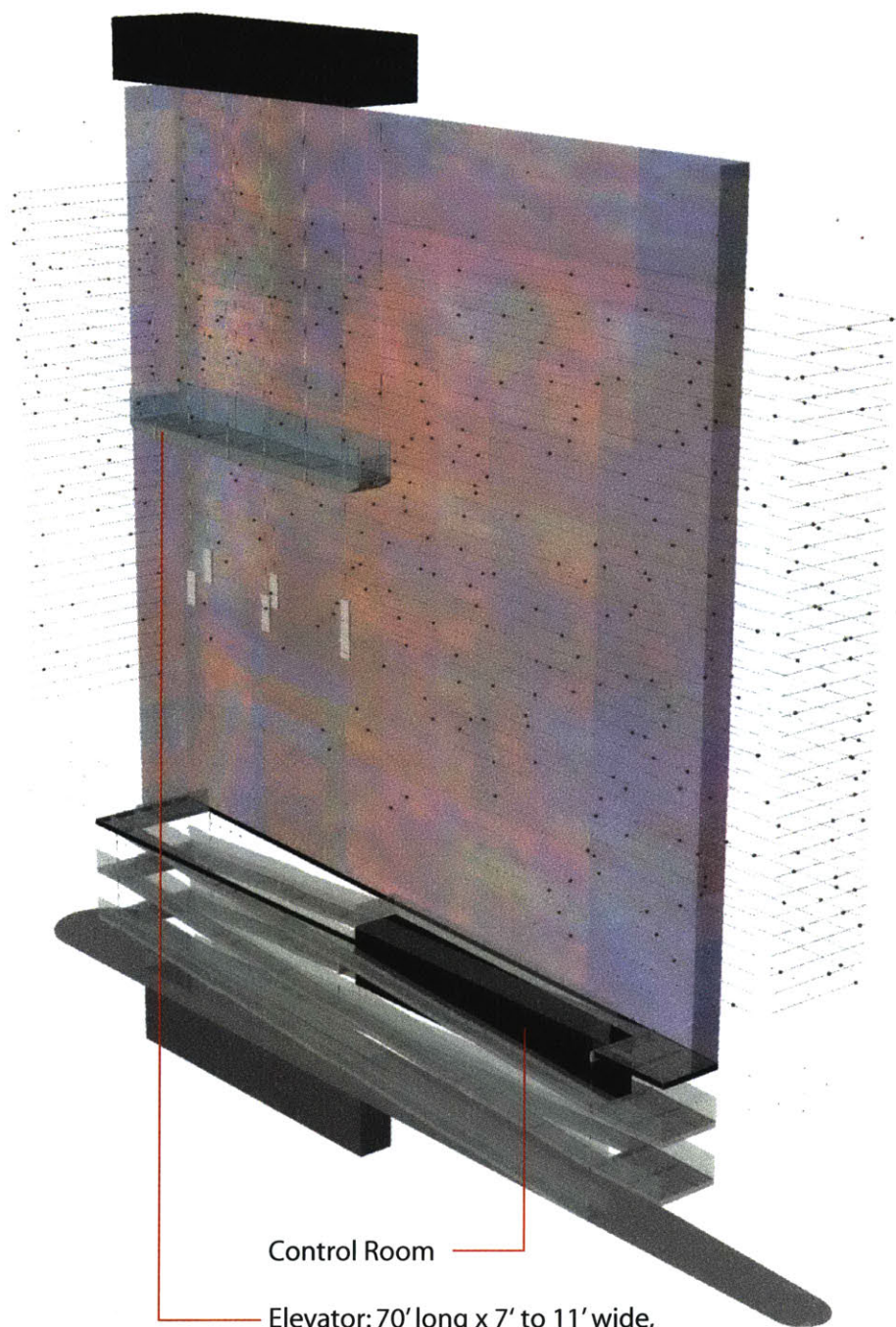
Fixed Lenses observing signage

Cameras monitoring total pedestrian flow



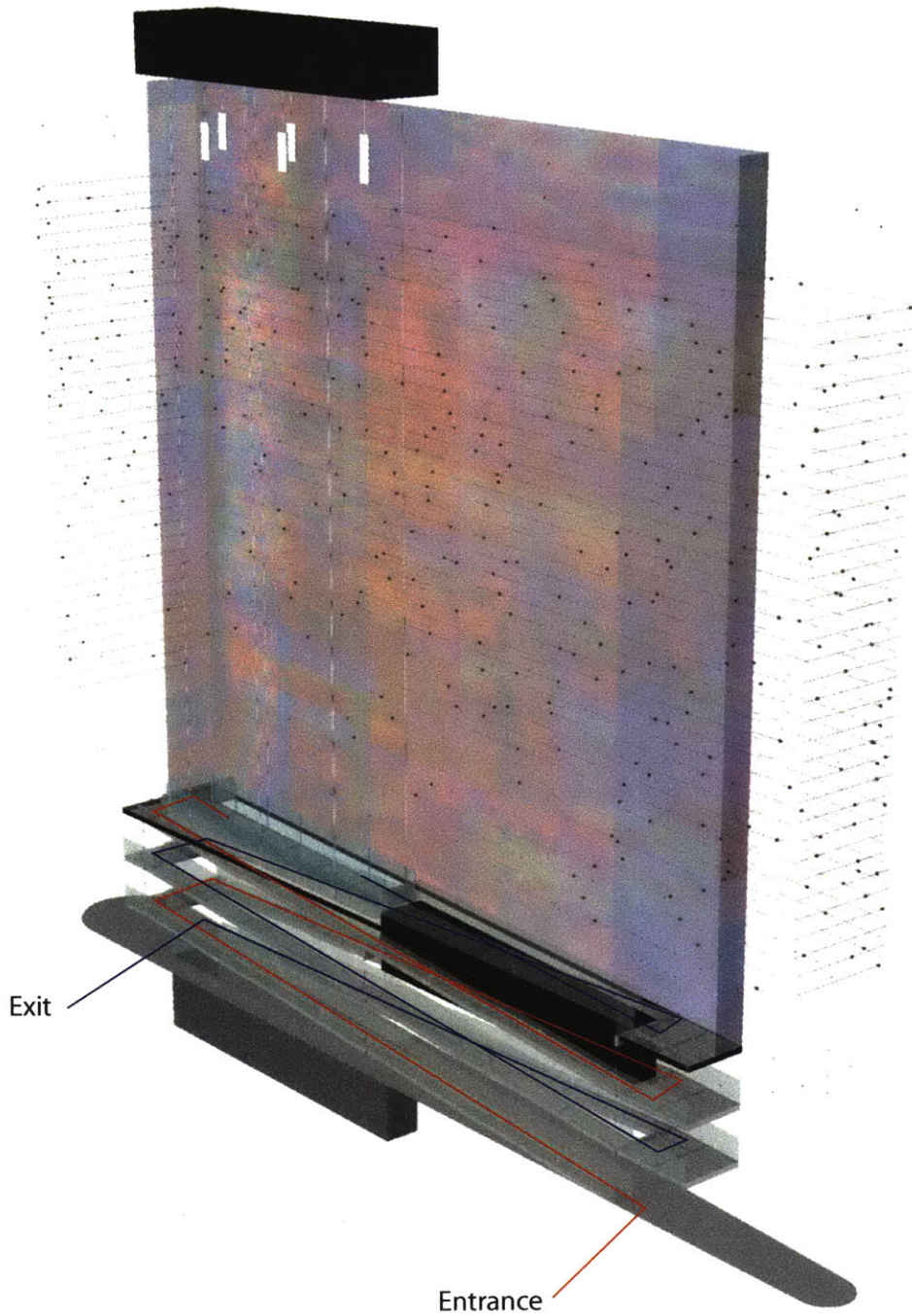


360 degree LED Screen:
140' High x 160' long
1mm pixel pitch
4.6 billion LED pixels



Control Room

Elevator: 70' long x 7' to 11' wide,
capacity of 180



Conclusions

“Seduction... is that which deviates, that which turns us away from the path, that which makes the real return to the great game of simulacra, which makes things appear and disappear. It could almost be the sign of an *original* reversibility of things.”

-Jean Baudrillard: *The Ecstasy of Communication*, 71

The nature of the Times Square Imago is that it translates legible content into image. An architecture that attempts to transport the virtual image into space must render that image as experiential: a visual experience of habitation that makes apparent the corporeal qualities of the image. For Bergson, the image is a point of transference between the virtual and the actual: the idea forged of pure virtuality and projected toward the ideomotor state of action. The image of the Imago is a similar point of transference, but disembodied, reified in architecture.

The building is essentially a translation device that deals exclusively in the process of becoming, but not in the act of signification. Like Bergson's virtual image, the Imago is a way station. It is a point of transference whereby dispersed actions are brought together in a single representation. This representation is pure form — a representational structure represented. The critical intent of the project is not made explicit; rather, it is embodied. The source information absorbed into the Imago leaves its markings on the building itself, reproduces incessantly its patterns within the image. This image-made-experience is not something to be considered as a critical object; rather, it is something to be felt as a force. The Imago attempts to harness the tremendous energy of Times Square and to make it legible not as content but as sensation.

This project is consciously positioned at the edge of criticality. The information uncovered throughout the course of the project concerning the methods of data collection and tabulation forms a common backdrop to the development of our cities and to the advertising images which punctuate our lives. The incredible concentration of information mirrors the concentration of capital and the concentration of the production and dissemination of images. Clear Channel, for example, claims to reach 54% of all people in the U.S. ages 18-49 through its 1200 radio stations and 56% of all American adults through its outdoor advertising properties *on a daily basis*. These are only two divisions of this media behemoth, and it is not even the largest of the global media companies. To me, criticality is confronted with a crisis in the face of such staggering influence. How can a project use conventional methods of signification to question the legitimacy or veracity of the designed image when so much force pushes in the other direction? So many images insist on their own importance that we as a public have adapted; for our own sanity we can only consume them indifferently. Even images of war-ravaged countries and disaster-stricken villages are rendered mute by the cacophony of sheer volume. This is a well-documented problem. I have chosen to critique the image at its foundation, at its most visceral level. The Imago renders the most charged content mute; yet its display of its mechanisms and its mode of habitation indirectly call into question the innocuousness of the image. Architectural effects become confounded with those of the image.

Images do not communicate directly; they communicate as much through the emotions that they trigger as through any sort of message that can be discerned. The Times Square Imago acts as an image in this way. It is a direct translation of information into image without the filtration of human intention (such as that behind the sale of a product). The only intention of this information-image is self-presentation — the logic of its own organization is buried within its final form. Yet, because it is an image-made-architecture, it communicates through *effect*. The experience of inhabiting this image is one that draws out sensations of the most primitive kind; it unconsciously references the very structure of perception. The occupant senses the primal nature of “image” — of its complicity with the passage of time, with memory, with all experience of the material world. The image is overwhelming in the Imago’s interior; for a moment it becomes the world. These things could never be explained to a mass audience, but they can be felt. This is my hope in abandoning direct criticality in this project. Whether one leaves the building having experienced some sort of personal epiphany or merely feeling numb, one will have at least felt, through architecture, the incredible potency of the image.

This project is for me a sort of prototype. It is a work of architecture that embodies a set of ideas about the structure of representation and how that structure operates at the foundations of contemporary society. Perhaps, like Guy Debord’s film *Society of the Spectacle*, it is a profound negation (see Appendix B). My intention is eventually to develop a set of less grandiose projects out of this dystopian ideal that is my thesis. Thus, the term imago is for me a perfect description of how this project should be understood: something in the process of maturing, something having grown and metamorphosed but at the same time nascent and naive, an archetype with no intention of setting into reality.

i·ma·go (-mg, -mä-)

n. pl. i·ma·goes or i·ma·gi·nes (-g-nz)

1. An insect in its sexually mature adult stage after metamorphosis.
2. An often idealized image of a person, usually a parent, formed in childhood and persisting unconsciously into adulthood.
3. See archetype.

Source: The American Heritage Stedman’s Medical Dictionary

Notes

1. The long form census data for tracts 119 and 125 in Manhattan is 292 pages in length. This comprises thousands of statistical categories which describe in baffling detail a total population of 3,219 people living in an area of .13 square miles.

-CensusCD 2000 Long Form

2. The mode of representation is obviously always an essential factor in determining what is revealed and what is concealed about a given set of conditions. However, in the first stage of this exercise, that of categorizing program by color and then connecting like-to-like with lines, there is a direct relationship between the information being conveyed and the visual strategy undertaken. Lines are employed to connect two points, and color is used merely for distinguishing between lines in different categories. While line and color are not the only means to visualize these conditions, they do so directly according to an internal logic. In spatializing this information, however, arbitrary decisions—such as the order in which to mesh the different points into a surface—must be made at each point. In the triangulated version all of these decisions are made by me; in the smooth version I provide a general ordering while the computer extrapolates the smaller increments. Thus, as the information is translated into form, the mode of representation takes on greater importance than the actual information. In the subsequent exercises I attempt to control the spatialization phase of the process with greater precision in order to allow the specificity of the information to remain essential—in order to postpone making direct design decisions until a later phase in the process.

3. <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/realprop.html>

4. The NASDAQ sign on the Conde Nast Building at the corner of 42nd Street and Broadway is currently the world's largest LED sign. It is 120 feet tall by 90 feet wide — about 10,000 square feet. It uses 18 million LED's; at its highest resolution it has a pixel pitch of 20 mm (this is the distance from centerline to centerline of the LED pixel, which is typically a cluster of red, green, and blue LED's). The sign, with the space behind it, was constructed in the late 1990's and cost \$37 million dollars to build. NASDAQ leases the sign for \$2 million a year. (All of this data as of Feb. 2000.)

Source: <http://www.smartvision.com/press/000217nasdaq.html> (11/04)

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Appendix A: Deleuze on Virtuality in Cinema

The Time of Becoming, The Time of Unbecoming: The Indiscernible in Luis Buñuel and Orson Welles

In his two books on cinema, Gilles Deleuze characterizes the history of film as progressing from the action-image to the time-image. Two important figures in this history are the directors Orson Welles and Luis Buñuel. Deleuze classifies Welles as the pivotal figure of film history, claiming that his *Citizen Kane* is "...the first great film of a cinema of time." (C2, 99). Buñuel occupies a less central position in this history; he seems to arrive at the time-image through an indirect route in that he pushes the action-image to the point of collapse. The most essential element of Deleuze's time-image is the coalescence of the real and the virtual, a condition that, in its subversion of the linearity of action-response, yields an image of the splitting of time itself: the crystal image. "The crystal image is, then, the point of indiscernibility of the two distinct images, the actual and the virtual, while what we see in the crystal is time itself, a bit of time in the pure state, the very distinction between the two images which keeps on reconstituting itself." (C2, 82). For Deleuze, it is in Orson Welles' film *The Lady from Shanghai* that "...the majority of the forms of the crystal image are undoubtedly to be found..." (C2, 73). By contrast, Luis Buñuel is noted for his mastery of cinematic naturalism, through which he comes "close to a time-image," but does not quite attain it because of his desire to subjugate time to "naturalistic co-ordinates"—actions (C1, 127). In the later stage of Buñuel's career, however, Deleuze claims that he arrives at the time-image through the influence of Robbe-Grillet, concocting a cinema in which multiple presents simultaneously inhabit a single scene. Buñuel's film *The Phantom of Liberty* is a film from this later period.

What is most interesting in comparing these two films is their different ways of sequencing time within the format of the crystal image. I refer to what Deleuze classifies as the third time-image, that which concerns the series of time, "...bring[ing] together the before and the after in a becoming, instead of separating them..." (C2, 155). Each of these films contains a distinctive principle of temporal ordering, what may be understood as the signature of the film. The ordering principle operates both on the level of the film as a whole and on the level of the individual moments or scenes within the film.

The Lady from Shanghai seems to follow a traditional, linear narrative in that, in general, one action leads to the next in chronological time. Yet, the film is riddled with references to its own future, not only in the voiceover of Welles' character recounting the story from some unspecified point in the future, but also from within the dialogue of the characters that populate this story he is recounting. The characters who inhabit this past-present of the film seem to draw knowledge from the future, the time from which the camera observes the events. In effect, the characters define each others' fate, scripting the events of the film back from the future-present. When Mrs. Bannister tells Michael O'Hara that he knows nothing of how the world works, she is condemning him to his fate that she has already determined. He knows nothing of her world, the world of her past that overlaps with those of Arthur Bannister and George Grisby, into which he has unwittingly entered. As Deleuze claims, these characters are embodiments of an inaccessible past, sheets of past which refuse to produce a recollection-image, but instead are actualized in the inexplicable actions of "...personalities which are independent, alienated, off-balance, in some sense embryonic..." (C2, 113). The pivotal

moment of the film arrives when the three antagonists are gathered around a fire at night, drinking and sweating in the heat of a remote tropical island. Bannister offers to reveal the truth of his past—how he came to marry Mrs. Bannister—but O'Hara will not hear it. He interrupts with the story of the sharks devouring one another. In this moment the outcome of the film is decided as O'Hara rejects knowledge of the Bannisters' past and replaces it with a story from his own past which then comes to define their future. In effect, the film is its own past, its future already embedded in the words and actions that define its past-present. The scene on the island and the telling of the story of the sharks is the instant around which the time of the film is structured, the instant when the virtual pasts of the characters collide to produce a future that will be actualized. Time in *The Lady from Shanghai* unfolds in two directions from this moment at the center of the film, thus producing a cosmos which is complete within itself, a cosmos where the virtual and actual intermingle, each determining the other across the extents of the film and not along it. This completeness is expressed by the final words spoken by O'Hara, when he says "Maybe I'll live to forget her, maybe I'll die trying." In these words, the entirety of the virtual future implied by the film is drawn back into its frame, actualized as the pure recollection of the film to be recounted as recollection images in the virtual future of the hero.

The most obvious aspect of the temporal ordering principle employed by Buñuel in *The Phantom of Liberty* is that the film does not "make sense" as a linear narrative. Although the film is presented as a linear progression through sequential time, the actions and characters from one scene do not progress to later scenes—they seem to be left behind by the progress of time itself. While Welles depicts an ordering of time that gives rise to a set of actions, Buñuel depicts a time which is independent of action, a time which passes on, leaving the action unresolved and unexplained. In this way, the ludicrous nature of a disordered time is exposed—a time which does not reveal its own contents except as fragments. As Deleuze claims, Buñuel makes repetition the law of the world.

"In this way he is already going beyond the world of impulses, to knock on the doors of time and free it from the slope or the cycles which still subjugated it to a content. Buñuel does not cling to symptoms and to fetishes, he elaborates another type of sign which might be called 'scene' and which perhaps gives us a direct time-image." (C1, 133).

This "scene" is the major organizing principle for Buñuel; it relates directly to the third time-image in that it "...introduce[s] an enduring interval in the moment itself." (C2, 155). In this light *The Phantom of Liberty* may be understood as a depiction of time as a series of moments, each with its own quality, which possess an inexplicable relationship with those moments that precede and follow. And yet, each scene is neither entirely independent nor is each scene entirely determined. In Deleuze's only comment on this film, he states that "...the postcards are truly pornographic, even though they represent only monuments stripped of all ambiguity; and the little girl is lost, even though she has never stopped being there and will be found again." (C2, 102-3). These scenes are indeterminate; the characters react to multiple outcomes from a single series of occurrences. The couple gasps at the postcards, calling them repulsive,

even though the camera reveals them to depict monuments. They then respond to one image, a sunset over Milan, as both an image of the city and a pornographic image—the image spawns a pure recollection of a sexual situation from a past visit to Milan, which propels them to a desperate, awkward, violent kiss. Thus the actual and virtual elements of the scene collide and infect one another, confusing the responses of the characters. But the depravity which is embodied in this kiss is not confined to a single scene. The same desperate, groping kiss recurs in another scene, this time between a boy and his older lover (a relative). Images and actions repeat in different scenarios: the recurring obsession with shiny shoes that seems to infect most of the men who carry guns, the mantle and the table as settings of bourgeois propriety which erupts into depravity, the fox and the emu as mute symbols which just appear. These are the fetishes which Deleuze characterizes as fundamental to Buñuel the naturalist, the objects which drive the impulse of the characters. In the young Buñuel of naturalist cinema, the impulse drives the action as the characters mine disparate worlds in order to satisfy it, and the action thus gives form to time indirectly as cyclical. However, in the later Buñuel of *The Phantom of Liberty*, the impulse seems to inhabit time itself, and the characters, trapped in its moments, discover the impulse already formed through time and can only act it out within the time of the scene. This is perhaps best illustrated by the symptom of the fox. A group of soldiers appears from out of nowhere, almost as if from a different world (a world of war which emerges within the world of peace throughout the film, most obviously at the beginning and end). Driving a tank along a dark country road, they stop the woman with whom the camera has been traveling, asking her if she has seen any foxes. Told “no,” they continue along the road, never to reappear. The fox, however, does appear later in the film, mounted on the wall in a room next door to the boy and his adult lover, implicitly listening in on their lovemaking. The fox inhabits the virtual world of the film, running along the dark roads and finally emerging, already hunted, killed, and mounted. It is only actualized as before and after, pursued and dead but never actually caught, its existence traverses the diverse moments of the film finding its own closure somehow in between. Thus Buñuel's *The Phantom of Liberty* is organized not as an unfurling of time, as is *The Lady from Shanghai*, but as time which is pleated, folded over on itself, coextensive. The fox is dead and alive at the same time, the postcards are both monuments and pornography, different characters follow the same impulses in different scenes—different worlds, different facets of the same time.

“It is as if Buñuel's naturalist cosmology, based on the cycle and the succession of cycles, gives way to a plurality of simultaneous worlds; to a simultaneity of presents in different worlds. These are not the subjective (imaginary) points of view in one and the same world, but one and the same event in different objective worlds, all implicated in the event, inexplicable universe.” (C2, 103).

Fundamental to the production of these different principles of ordering time is a point of view—a way of revealing the world of the film to the viewer through the lens of the camera. As Deleuze asserts, the shot “...acts like a consciousness. But the sole cinematographic consciousness is not us, the spectator, nor the hero; it is the camera—sometimes human, sometimes inhuman or superhuman.” (C1, 20). Within this classification, Buñuel's camera seems to be of the inhuman variety. The human camera would be one which makes decisions and tries

to apply an order, which follows actions and has sympathies. This is the camera of Welles in *The Lady from Shanghai*, a camera tethered to the hero, which observes the action of the film from over his shoulder, which inhabits his time of the future-present looking back to the past-present. The superhuman camera would be one which takes the tendencies of the human yet adds a more omniscient perceptive capacity—a camera with human tendencies that can see beyond the limits of the human. Buñuel's camera seems to be without emotion, without preference. It wanders through an indeterminate temporal field, not making connections between events but rather disclosing those connections that are already there—those impulses that exist already in time that seek out characters through whom to find expression. Buñuel's camera is automatic, a sort of destiny, a vision of the inevitable that is at the same time completely interchangeable with any other inevitable. The world that the camera reveals is arbitrary, a random sampling of the Whole that is indicated by the film. It is as if the camera is an asteroid traveling through time and space which temporarily falls into the orbit of one character or another, the time of the character then sending the camera on a new trajectory. The splitting of time into virtual and actual is literally played out by the camera at every juncture in the film: the camera slips into a temporal stream, a present which belongs to an individual or ensemble that tears it from its previous object, virtualizing the past at the same instant as it is present, turning toward a future that is made actual by this very split, this perpetual departure from the scene—the moment. The continuity between the disparate scenes is always reduced to a single point—an instant—one character that projects the camera into a different world, a world that repeats the moment under a new set of conditions. Thus Buñuel's camera is a machine that advances time; it subordinates all actions to the distended moment, and the moment can only pass on when the camera, through its inexplicable, automated inner-workings, determines a new scene to follow. (This is a construction of cinematic time that literalizes the action of the camera.)

Deleuze claims that in the films of Welles, the distinction between the objective and subjective is called into question (C2, 148). In *Citizen Kane* this ambiguity is generated by the objective presentation of Kane's life through the subjective recollections of the people interviewed. In *The Lady from Shanghai*, however, this distinction is blurred not so much by the narrative framing of the story as by the human nature of the camera-consciousness. The story of the movie is both told by O'Hara the narrator and revealed by the camera which follows O'Hara the character. In fact, the camera is "born" into the world of the film in the same way that O'Hara arrives, emerging from the sea and traveling into the city by way of the harbor. (Buñuel's camera arrives out of the depths of history and representation, moving first from a Goya painting, to the historical events of the painting reenacted and embellished, and finally emerging out of the pages of a book to the filmic present.) Because of their close association, the delusions of Michael O'Hara affect the camera, calling into question the veracity of the frame itself. It is the constant interplay between the story as told and the story as revealed that destabilizes the time of the film and allows the virtual to be seen. In the opening scene of the film, as O'Hara the character rescues Mrs. Bannister from the thugs who seem to be robbing her, O'Hara the narrator calls into question that which is shown. He states that this is a place where hold-ups were often staged, but that these men were not professionals, which is why he seems like a hero, which he certainly is not. Right at the outset Welles establishes a contradiction between what is seen and what is happening—he looks like a hero but is not, it

appears like a real robbery but it could be staged. In this way, all possible understandings of the scene emerge at once, and the possible and the real become indecipherable. Moreover, by establishing the event as multiplicitous, Welles gives more weight to the virtuality of the event as a past that is internal to the film, one which resurfaces throughout the film through its relations to other events which are equally uncertain. Inversely, the fact that the camera is affected by the uncertainty of the hero to whom it is attached is mirrored by the infusion of the hero with knowledge of the future that seems to be passed to him through the camera. The camera reveals a past-present, which means that it looks back at the events of the film from some other time in the future. This gives a perceptive capacity to the camera which is seemingly beyond that of the human; yet, O'Hara himself is imbued with this capacity, both as narrator looking back and as actor within the past-present. Thus the subjective and objective are further conflated as O'Hara, the character who is revealed, seems to be able to access the objective knowledge of the camera that reveals him. At the beginning of the film O'Hara is already able to describe the remote place in China that is Mrs. Bannister's birthplace, he already knows Mr. Bannister by reputation, and he can already surmise his own fate—but he is inexplicably powerless to act on this foresight. O'Hara appears to be the pessimist in light of the good fortune which seems to have befallen him, yet he is actually speaking the truth of the future-present in the face of deceptive images of a past-present. While Buñuel's camera is a singular machine, Welles' camera is duplicitous, it acts both through the character of O'Hara and on its own. It is both man and superman—but perhaps even more human, more naïve, than the character of O'Hara himself: the images revealed by the camera are almost always innocent while the future O'Hara projects for himself is almost always true.

For Deleuze it is the figure of the ship at sea which encapsulates the double nature of the time-image:

“...the yacht called 'The Circe' reveals a visible face and an invisible face, a limpid face that for a moment the naïve hero allows himself to be caught by, while the other face, the opaque one, the great dark stage of the aquarium of monsters, rises in silence and grows as the first one becomes vague or blurred.” (C2, 73).

It is from the deck of the Circe that Grisby is first seen, spying on Mrs. Bannister sunbathing on the rocks as he is watched by O'Hara, he then approaches the yacht from far in the distance and then below in his dingy. O'Hara gazes down at Grisby bobbing in the water from his stance on the deck, the camera positioned behind the dark mass of his shoulder. Grisby is to become the monster of the aquarium, the opaque underside of the ship, for it is in the aquarium that O'Hara and Mrs. Bannister will discuss Grisby's plot, where Mrs. Bannister seals her own plot with a public kiss. Meanwhile O'Hara still inhabits the limpid face of the deck, standing only at the edge of the virtual past of these three characters that will ensnare him—that are ensnaring him at that moment—that already have ensnared him from the opening sequence of the film. Thus the crystal image splits open the temporal relationships that structure the Whole of the film, that exist virtually in every moment of the film but can never be revealed in full.

The key figure that Deleuze cites in the work of Buñuel is the animal. In the context of Bu-

ñuel's naturalism, the animal embodies the impulse that drives the human characters:

"This is not because they have their form or behaviour, but because their acts are prior to all differentiation between the human and the animal. These are human animals. And indeed this is the impulse: the energy which seizes fragments in the originary world." (C1, 123-4).

The primacy of the originary world in the work of Buñuel seems to belong to his early period, before he had fully mastered the time-image. Yet, *The Phantom of Liberty* presents these elements—the animals, the originary world—in the new context of a cinema of time. The originary world depicted in this film is that which emerges out of the Goya painting in the opening sequence of the film: an execution scene which is obviously staged to resemble the painting, which then spills over into the desecration of a church and then into a tale of an animated statue and a corpse that has resisted the decay of centuries. But this whole scene is encapsulated within the pages of a book, its temporal displacement from the other scenes in the film neutralized by its sudden transformation from a scene that stands alone to a scene which is read and imagined within a scene. Here the originary world does not close out the other milieus that it infects, rather it seems to be closed off itself, folded into the larger fabric of time that the film depicts. Its virtual distance from the other scenes is itself virtualized, made into a myth or perhaps the dream-image of the maid who reads the story. Certainly the debaucheries of the soldiers—their killing, disrespect for religion, sexual depravities—arise in the other worlds of the film, but they appear as the repetition of an impulse in a series of moments which turn over on themselves, an impulse that exists as an expression of time itself, exposing its virtualities. In this film, the animals do not come out of the originary world, but, like the impulse, they travel across time seemingly unperturbed. The same animal, the same impulse, arises in different worlds, making its dumb presence visible as a mere presence, a symbol within a circumstance that unfolds automatically. The emu which emerges from the husband's dream at the beginning of the film, walking around the bedroom, is both a dream and not a dream, virtual and actual. The husband responds to it as such, doing nothing at the moment of its presence as if he is dreaming, he later complains of its reality to his doctor. Thus its actuality is only constituted later, once it is already virtual. It is the same emu that witnesses the massacre at the zoo when the film ends, the same emu trapped in the same moment in a different world. The emu walks across the pleats of Buñuel's time, poking its head selectively into scenes which are folded one over the other.

While the animal embodies the impulse which generates the actions of Buñuel's film, the image that embodies the film's temporal structure is that of the door, and in particular the scene in the hotel where the camera waits on the landing as the various figures pass by, opening and closing the many doors that enclose the space. It is as if the machine-camera has momentarily malfunctioned, and the viewer is exposed to its inner workings, forced to observe the choice that should be automatic. We must watch only the doors as the characters go about their business on the other side, passing through in random succession, moving from unseen room to unseen room. Glimpses of the world beyond the doors unleash streams of virtuality—each room an entire universe of potential that opens and closes in an instant. This is made especially apparent when one of the monks emerges from a door carrying a small reliquary that also contains a set of closed doors; without revealing its contents he disappears through another door. These rooms are the multiple presents that the film depicts, and each

door, in its opening, is the camera. And so the camera pauses there, like narcissus, obsessed with its own image. Buñuel's door is neither an entrance nor an exit; it does not access an inside from an outside. It is always merely a passage, a transition between insides which are both successive and interchangeable. In effect, the door remains constant while that which lies beyond the door is in motion; the camera stands still, opening and closing the shutter door on the same moment in different worlds that pass in front of it.

For Welles, the image that is emblematic of the temporal structure of the film is the mirror. It is

“...in the famous palace of mirrors in *The Lady from Shanghai* where the principle of indiscernibility reaches its peak: a perfect crystal-image where the multiple mirrors have assumed the actuality of the two characters who will only be able to win it back by smashing them all, finding themselves side by side and each killing the other.” (C2, 70).

As much as it is the Bannisters who try to win back their actuality from the mirrors, it is Michael O'Hara, as witness, who finally attains a clear image of the world in which he is ensnared, the world of which Mrs. Bannister tells him he understands nothing. As the scene progresses, O'Hara, who was initially paired with Mrs. Bannister, fades into a morass of reflections, cropped out by the multiplying images of the two Bannisters. Their figures are juxtaposed and rearranged in reflection, scalar relationships distorted and inverted, their gazes locked on each other and themselves. All of their virtuality spills forth: their past, never revealed, is here fully embodied, their present intensified and their future made immanent. O'Hara the character and O'Hara the camera watch silently, objectively, finally content to allow the many realities to converge in the climactic violent act. As the mirrors are shattered in a barrage of bullets the Bannisters collapse on the floor, dying on their stomachs in a pile of shattered glass, fulfilling O'Hara's prophecy. Captured in the mirrors are the whole time of the film and the time of the virtual whole that the film indicates. The time of the film is a reflective time, where every event is made instantly virtual, instantly indiscernible, but still contained, reflected back to the other events, the other virtualities which arise and intermingle as reflections. The unfortunate Michael O'Hara is the character who falls (literally, down a white slide through a dark, boundless space) into this hall of mirrors, is trapped by the indiscernibility of the reflections and can only wait until the actors who produce the reflections are driven to shatter them, to release him from their time. (But their past will haunt his future.) Unlike Buñuel's automatic camera, which malfunctions when confronted with its own image, Welles' human camera is enamored with the image of others, the image reflected in its own lens, from which it cannot break even though this infatuation nearly drives its avatar (O'Hara) to his death. It is only death that can break the spell, can turn the camera away from looking for what it will never find: truth, that which is real, which motivates these inexplicable personalities.

According to Deleuze, Bergson classifies the two poles of perception as follows: “...a subjective perception is one in which the images vary in relation to a central and privileged image; an objective perception is one where, as in things, all the images vary in relation to one another, on all their facets and in all their parts.” (C1, 76). Deleuze claims that these two poles coalesce when the privileged centre of the subjective image is put into motion such that it begins to resemble an acentred system. Perhaps it is through this action that the differing camera-consciousnesses of the two directors begin to produce a similarly disjointed, com-

pressed image of time. Buñuel's camera seems to produce an objective perception: the characters in the film are various; there is no central figure through whom to understand the other characters. Furthermore, the impulses which arise in the characters of the film do not constitute a central image for they appear in various guises and arise in an unpredictable fashion. If Buñuel generates a cycle out of repetitions, there can be no center. Welles, by contrast, seems to begin from a subjective perception in which the camera reveals the particular viewpoint of the protagonist. However, as has been discussed above, the viewpoint of the protagonist is not a stable center, but leaps from one virtuality to the other, always questioning the veracity of that which appears. Deleuze claims that Welles' intention is "...to be a person no longer... A becoming, an irreducible multiplicity, characters or forms are now valid only as transformations of each other." (C2, 145). These are characters that predict each others' futures, that seem to have inexplicable knowledge of each others' past, yet are still incapable of acting individually on their knowledge. The subjective center that seems to be the viewpoint of Michael O'Hara is actually a center which tends toward motion, which tends to incorporate itself into a shifting ensemble. Buñuel achieves a comparable image of time by the inverse strategy: characters that are mainly ensembles, collections of attributes and impulses that are played out in groups, strive toward personality, differentiation. This distinction (which tends toward a similar outcome) is illustrated by the fact that most of Welles' characters have multiple names that are used variously depending on which others are present while most of the characters in Buñuel's film have no name at all, but rather a surplus of costumes, assumed roles. The characters of both directors ultimately fail in their striving. O'Hara fails to become a non-person by the mere fact of his survival, while at the same time he internalizes the affects of the ensemble in which he was enmeshed. Buñuel's characters each drop away, consumed by the impulse which projects itself across time, culminating in the inexplicable image of the emu coupled with the sound of gunfire. Ultimately, both films produce a primal sense of time, a time which submerges the characters in its many facets, a time which is indiscernible, to which there can be no reaction but which nevertheless leaves its traces in actions that are by nature inexplicable.

Works Referenced:

(C 1) Deleuze, Gilles. Cinema 1: The Movement-Image. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1986.

(C 2) Deleuze, Gilles. Cinema 2: The Time-Image. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1989.

Appendix B: On Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle*

The Double Negative: Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle*

Guy Debord's work *The Society of the Spectacle* has appeared in many guises since its first publication in the form of a text in 1967. The text takes the form of a book composed of 221 theses, divided into nine sections, each headed by a quotation from another source. Six years after the publication of the book, Debord released a film of the same name. More than just an illustration of the book, the film is a reworking of its contents (Levin 373). The text of the book, which is read aloud on the audio track of the film, is edited substantially—reduced by about half—and reordered. Furthermore, the film adds a number of textual quotations which are not present in the book. Most importantly, however, the film couples ninety minutes of images with the text. These images, all of which are détourned, or borrowed from other sources, add a new layer of significance to an already dense text.

Only three years after the release of the film, Debord produced a short (20 minute) film called *Refutation of all judgements whether for or against, which have been brought to date on the film Society of the Spectacle*, which, as the title suggests, takes as its subject the published criticism of the film *Society of the Spectacle*—a film about the reception of another film. Subsequent to this film's release in Paris, the second American edition of *Society of the Spectacle* (the book) was published (1977), containing the translated text of the original book, illustrated with still images framed in a film strip (most of these images are not actually from the film). Finally, in 1978, Debord published a book called *Complete Cinematographic Works*, containing scenarios and illustrations of all six of his films (the last of which had not yet been screened). Thus the film had itself become a text. In a final paradoxical twist, Debord permanently withdrew all of his films from circulation in 1984 following the murder of his patron Gerard Lebovici, and therefore the film has come to exist almost exclusively in the form of a text (aside from illicit copies in circulation). In summation, *Society of the Spectacle* encompasses a text, a film, a film about the textual criticism of the film, a text with filmic illustrations, and a film represented as an illustrated text.

Each of these different forms has made use of words and images in different combinations, all seemingly with the ultimate goal of conveying meaning in such a way as to challenge the hegemonic means and modes of representation. I propose in this paper not to discuss in detail all of the various forms that this polemic has taken, but to analyze the representational tactics presented in what is perhaps the central work of this trajectory, the film. The juxtaposition of word and image is innate to the medium of film as it is a medium composed of image and sound rendered in time. The relationships inherent in this understanding of the medium of film make it perhaps the most exemplary form of spectacle according to Debord's formulation, and therefore film is the ideal medium through which to present his theories. The first thesis of *The Society of the Spectacle* reads: "The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of *spectacles*. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." Debord's presentation of his ideas through words and images in his film is intended not to be a critique of society merely through its content, but also, and most significantly, through its means of representation.

Before delving into an analysis of the film, I would like to examine some of the previous visual works of the Situationist International, the political and artistic group of which Debord was the central figure from its formation in 1957 until its dissolution in 1972.

Détournement

Détournement means, literally, “diversion.” In practice, this technique consists of the appropriation of material—textual, visual, or physical—and the application or transformation of meaning. This shift in meaning occurs in many ways, the simplest of which may be transplanting an object or image, unaltered, into a new context. Figure 1 is taken from the Situationist International journal. The mere placement of this advertisement into a journal of radical political and artistic content causes it to become a self-critiquing image rather than a product advertisement. Its intended use as a promotional image shifts to that of a critical image. The exact nature of the critique—whether this image becomes a general comment on the narcissism inherent in the desire for display and representation (arguably the impetus for this product), or an exposure of the ludicrous nature of the “need” which the product purports to fulfill—is ultimately up to the viewer. What is more important is the exposure of the process of translation from word-image to message-emotion; through the tactic of détournement, the image + caption can be read dialectically, rather than absorbed uncritically in a state of distraction.

Another means of détournement is direct juxtaposition. While in the previous example the interplay is between image and context, the juxtaposition illustrated in figures 2 and 3 is between images détourned from different sources and brought together as a couple. These images appear on facing pages of the SI journal, captioned “good negro” and “bad negro.” The simple pairing of the images, especially when elucidated by the simply juxtaposed captions, generates a much more potent shift in meaning than if the images were simply placed alone in a new (critical) context. The images no longer constitute isolated incidents within a field of objective reality, but become formulated as extreme examples of a social condition. The image on the left depicts an indigenous African being consumed as an object of touristic curiosity, while that on the right displays the corpse of an African American consumed by flames. On the left the audience is a pair of jovial young white women in beach attire, on the right a pack of satisfied white men in standard working clothes. This cursory analysis exposes some simple truths: on the left the feminine consumption of the negro, on the right the masculine consumption, in both the negro consumed, either subjugated by the gaze or destroyed through violence. The stark captions seem to be the most potent agent in tying together these images. Rather than describing the depicted events as one would expect, the captions formulate a very primitive judgment of these events. Confusing our expectation with what is actually written, for a moment we accept this judgment as the actual description of what is shown. The momentary slip in the process of comprehension that is produced by these captions repositions the images as social critique: from “good negro” to “bad negro” is the full spectrum of the existence of the negro according to the dictates of white society, and this reality of this spectrum is witnessed by the photographs above. The most potent aspect of this example is that we are made conscious of this shift in signification through our own cognitive action—our expectation that the images will be explained by the words which are printed below. To use Barthes’ terminology, the denotative aspect of these press photos has been made second-

ary to their connotative aspect; they do not depict events, rather, they reveal our reception of these depictions. This tactic reappears in Debord's film in a much more comprehensive form.

Finally, *détournement* may be achieved by altering an object. All of the objects shown in figures 4-7 have been *détourned* through writing on them. A reproduction of a painting, an original painting, currency, and a photographic portrait all take on a complex new set of meanings through the inscription of text on their surface. In three of these examples, the assumed "high" stature of the original work is questioned by the use of cartoon bubble captions, while the actual content of the message makes the original seem foolish in its new context. Conversely, through a chain of associations with the original image, the inserted text assumes a higher degree of significance despite its often playful nature. One can understand this collision of text and image to be actually drawing attention to its own operation, masquerading as propaganda while exposing the very workings of the propagandistic message. The obvious, playful interplay of the original image and the superimposed text proposes a form of anti-propaganda. This aspect of *détournement*, the generation of an image which exposes its own operations, is extremely important in understanding Debord's film.

Writing on the City

One of the central concerns of the Situationist movement was the occupation of the city. This aim was developed largely through a technique called the *dérive*, which basically consists of walking through the city in an undirected manner, seeking out areas which possess a certain unified ambiance. Essentially, the practice of the *dérive* is a sort of survey of the city conducted through personal interaction with its terrain and occupants. This practice found visual corollaries in Situationist documents in the form of psychogeographic maps—maps which indicate trajectories, moods, interactions, and generally a subjective understanding of space (figure 8). Through these maps, the territory of the city is figuratively appropriated and recomposed, rendered as a place that is perceived and comprehended rather than as a place that has been plotted and fixed. Through the *dérive*, the city is taken as collection of abstract symbols, and meaning is generated through the physical occupation of, and movement through, this urban text. In other words, according to Situationist practice, the city and its objects have no fixed value, but significance can be applied through engagement. This attitude toward the city, and culture in general, is latent within *The Society of the Spectacle*, and may prove useful in understanding its intent.

The Spectacle

While I do not propose to describe all aspects of Debord's nuanced theory of the spectacle in this paper, a cursory understanding is necessary in order to examine the film. This is especially true since the concept of the spectacle is so closely wedded to the production and reception of images, and therefore the specific means of representation employed in Debord's film are a direct outgrowth of his theory. Thesis 4 of *The Society of the Spectacle* reads: "The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images." To me, this is the essence of Debord's theory. The spectacle is not a material thing, and it does not exist as media, but all material things and all media exist as part of the spec-

tacle. As a mediation of social relationships through images, the spectacle constitutes a surrogate reality, a sort of repository into which people project their needs and desires, and out of which needs and desires are generated. The spectacle eternally regenerates “the prevailing mode of social life...” (Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* 13), and in so doing it is in the service of power and the commodity. “The spectacle is capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image.” (Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* 24). Thus, when examining the work of Debord, one must keep in mind his assumption that all images are part of the spectacle, and that ideology is inherent within all images. In this light, the practice of *détournement* becomes even more potent for it possesses the capability of exposing the ideology of the image. In so doing, the image becomes (partially) liberated from the service of capital, where it poses as an objective presentation of content, and is placed within a context of critical participation, where the viewer’s role in receiving the image becomes active.

Debord’s Films: An Overview

Transforming the reception of an image from passive to active is a major goal in Debord’s cinematic works. Figure 9 is an image from the SI journal entitled, “Situationists at the cinema.” Figure 10 is a still from Debord’s last film, *We Go Around in Circles in the Night and Are Consumed by Fire* (*In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni*), showing a typical movie audience staring at the screen. Ignoring the reflexive nature of placing the latter image in a film, so that the audience actually sees itself represented staring back at itself, these two images present opposing views of spectatorship. In the left image the spectators are in the illuminated space of the film projection; they are the subjects of the film. In the right image the spectators are staring expectantly at the screen; they do not participate in the film, they merely witness it.

A brief discussion of Debord’s first film, *Howls in Favor of Sade* (1951), will establish some basic assumptions which underlie all of his cinematic work. The premise of this film may be understood as the destruction of the cinematic image (Levin 344). The eighty minute film contains no images, and only a total of 20 minutes of spoken dialogue *détourned* from various sources. The final 24 minutes of the film is a silent black screen. An account of the film’s opening describes an outraged audience crying out during the film, and a group of Debord’s associates instigating a playful projectile war during the screening. Most were in disbelief that the film offered not a single image, especially given the provocative title, yet no one left before the end of the film. (Maurice Rajsfus, qtd. in Mension 88-91). In the screening of the film, the active reception by the audience constitutes the totality of the film, for there is virtually no film to witness. *Howls in Favor of Sade* is an emphatically negative gesture; it may be understood as establishing a *tabula rasa* for the reformulation of cinema. Its effect is to expose the artificiality of the assumption that cinema is the movement of images accompanied by sound (Levin 345). As Debord claims in his final film, “It is society and not technology that has made cinema what it is. The cinema could have been historical examination, theory, essay, memories. It could have been the film which I am making at this moment.” (qtd. in Levin 321). For Debord, the medium of the cinema, like the spectacle itself, is not inherently corrupt, it only becomes so through its relationship to capital; potentially both can be made to serve other ends. In other words, a certain market-driven inertia has caused cinema to take as its standard form a legible, coherent representation of reality, rather than allowing the medium greater

latitude to explore other modes of representation. Debord's later films deal very much with the ideas established by his first film, often privileging word over image in the cinema, and always refusing narrative coherence.

Society of the Spectacle

The Society of the Spectacle is, simply put, a barrage of détourned images accompanied by a barrage of original theory. There is a loose structure to the presentation of both, but seemingly all general rules are occasionally violated. For example, the typical sequence of the film is structured by Debord reading theses from his book, one after another, as images are depicted on the screen. The images are photographic stills, paintings, newsreel footage, or samples from other films. The duration of the images seems to be based on a rhythm that is independent from that of the text being read, and likewise there seems to be no consistent relationship between one image and the next. These (typical) sequences are punctuated by a black screen with white text, which is text not taken from the book but from elsewhere. During these screens there is no sound. Occasionally Debord stops reading and a sample from another film is inserted, which synchronizes the sound with the image for a brief period. I believe that the general format which the film follows, a format which resists a simple characterization as a format, negates any possibility of discerning a consistent, one-to-one relationship between the theory being read and the images being displayed. Rather, the film is structured as two independent sequences played simultaneously, one auditory and one visual, one more conceptual and one more visceral. However, the apparent independence of these elements of the filmic sequence is not total; relations arise between what is spoken and what is seen on many different levels and at many specific moments. Although many particular word-image relationships may be repeated throughout the film, these relationships are not predictable and cannot be reduced to a formula by which to structure the overall film.

The text of the film by itself has the quality of a manifesto, absolute in its assertions and totalizing in the worldview it projects. According to Mimi Parent, "The manifesto builds into its surroundings its own conditions for reception..." (xxiii). In the context of this simple formulation the manifesto, Debord's film problematizes the manifesto's typical mode of operation. On the one hand, we may take the text of the film to be the manifesto, and its "surroundings" to be the film's images. On the other hand, since the manifesto takes the form of a film, we may take the images and the text together to constitute the manifesto, and then assume that together they provide "conditions for reception." Neither of these understandings is satisfactory, because when we try to decipher the images, we see a portrait of contemporary society as image. This is the very phenomenon that the text describes as the fundamental condition of contemporary society. With the first understanding, then, the "surrounding" images within the film become analogous to the real world of images, and their very lack of comprehensibility seems to suggest that the text of the manifesto can project no "conditions for reception," even within the visual context that the film provides. With the second understanding, the text-image manifesto presents itself as critiquing the very phenomenon of which it is a representation: a world of images fraught with ideology. As a manifesto, then, *The Society of the Spectacle* seems to reject its own reception while critiquing its own structure. This negative understanding of the work is crucial, for by its nature as a "work" it must co-exist with the culture that it

critiques. As Thomas Levin asserts, "Debord's film... is a 'critique without concessions,' a spectacle of spectacle that as such, like the double negative, reverses the (hegemonic) ideological markings of the medium." (396). It is a manifesto which proposes itself as the last manifesto, an announcement that the manifesto is no longer a legitimate form of critique in contemporary society. This text/film is to the manifesto what *Howls in Favor of Sade* is to the film: a clean slate, an end and, potentially, a beginning.

The only unifying aspect of the image sequence in the film is the mere fact that they are all images and seem to operate as such. This is not to say that there is no structure to the presentation of the images, but that there is no all-encompassing order. There are notable motifs: images depicting nude women, war, political rallies, technological progress, fashion photography, manufacturing, rioting, and surveillance are repeated throughout the film. However, the typical operation of the image becomes muddled in the relentless, sequential presentation; the specific reality that each seems to depict is so varied and fragmented that all visual narrative coherence is lost. These images operate in a manner similar to that of the "traumatic photo" described by Barthes: "...the traumatic photograph... is the photograph about which there is nothing to say; the shock-photo is by structure insignificant..." (*Image-Music-Text* 31). The specific, denotative meanings of the images remain intact, yet their connotative aspects become subsumed by the larger sequence. As soon as one starts to make associations with a single image, the next one appears with an entirely new set of associations, and the associations of the previous one are shifted to the background of one's consciousness. All that remains is the memory of the actual image and what it denotes. As Walter Benjamin asserts about the medium of film in general, "The spectator's process of association in view of these images is indeed interrupted by their constant, sudden change. This constitutes the shock effect of the film..." (238). Connotations are assembled later, through the action of memory and in the absence of the image, such that the particular operations of the image are no longer present for examination. In this way, the "natural" or "innocent" quality of the images is simultaneously presented as the only possible understanding, and, through the assertions of the text, as the lack of understanding. To Debord, the confusion that arises from the accumulation of images is a reflection of the real world, where the ideological operations enacted through the image become lost in its proliferation. In response to criticism that his film is incoherent, Debord claimed, "No film is more difficult than its epoch." (Levin 403).

Before pursuing more general analysis of the film, I would like to examine the opening sequence in order to illustrate the film's general texture and to establish some specific tactics which are repeated throughout the film. After the introductory dedication, which is a sequence of black and white photographs of Alice Becker-Ho accompanied by music and text in subtitles, the first moving image is of the Earth as seen by an astronaut on a space walk. This sequence initiates in silence, the texture of the earth scrolling across the screen, and then Debord begins to read the first thesis of *Society of the Spectacle* in a monotone voice: "The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." Midway through the last line, the image shifts to a half-naked woman convulsing on a stage, the background is decorated in an abstract forest-jungle pattern.

In this brief sequence, one can uncover a couple of seemingly intentional connections between what is heard and what is seen. First, there must be some significance to the coupling of music with the photographs of Alice Becker-Ho. Perhaps it is the fact that she was a living person known to Debord, and therefore must be separated from the stream of borrowed images through sound. Her image is accompanied by music, not Debord's dictation of his theory. She is an individual, someone known not through her representation as spectacle but through the interactions that colored her life. Yet, once one has watched the entire film, a striking similarity between the presentation of her photographs and those of the pin-up girls which appear throughout the rest of the film becomes apparent. Becker-Ho can almost be seen as another half-nude woman subjecting her flesh to the cold, objectifying gaze of the camera lens. Her intense eyes peer out from the screen, trying to grasp your attention, but only for a moment, and then the next image appears, and it is her nude torso, head occluded. The moment of her appearance is seemingly too brief to allow the viewer to discover what Barthes calls "punctum"—the prick of emotive significance that makes a photograph more than just a document of something which occurred (*Camera Lucida* 27). The discovery of punctum in a photograph requires time for examination, according to Barthes, and yet there is a residual feeling that remains once the film has moved on to display other images. A memory of Alice, a fleeting familiarity, is formed by the half-dozen photographs which flashed across the screen. This sensation of almost being able to discern something about what is depicted in the image is one that returns to me throughout the film. The separation announced by the music is thus an ambiguous one, it is forceful enough to be noticeable, yet not forceful enough to overpower the visual similarities between this special part of the film and the more typical sequences which are to follow.

The silence which introduces the image of the Earth provides a pause which does not exist in the visual sequence, which is structured as a cut from Becker-Ho's still visage to the moving surface of the Earth. Debord begins to speak: "All of life..." and we can make an immediate connection to the image of the earth. Yet, as he completes the reading of the thesis, this connection fades somewhat, and the earth seems more of an abstract symbol, forming the backdrop for the statement but not illustrating it. Before he has finished the last sentence of this thesis, the scene cuts to a striptease, and we hear "...moved away into a representation." Then he begins to read the second thesis without pause, with the same monotone: "The images that detach themselves from every aspect of life fuse in a common stream where the unity of life can no longer be re-established..." I can find no obvious connection between these words and the striptease, yet I want to find one there, because it seems that Debord must be explaining what he is showing—why else would he show us this tantalizing image? So I begin to think of the striptease as a representation, her convulsions as representative of a lack of unity—but these are forced associations. He seems to be using the same tactic noted earlier as characteristic of *détournement*, that of playing with our expectations of reception. The images coupled with the monotone voice have the quality of a news broadcast, and, just like the "good negro" caption, the voiceover assumes the position of explanation within this standard form of communication. Yet, the voiceover is not really explaining the particular image, it attempts to explain all images, all of society even. Given the broad nature of the "explanation," and its authoritative superimposition over the images, we are tempted to accept what is spoken as explanation for the image of the woman stripping, and then for the following

images of the subway, the TV monitors, Lee Harvey Oswald's assassination, the French Prime Minister... in short, for the whole of modern society as represented by this sampling of filmed events. But this would be an over-simplification of the manner in which one receives the film, for there is not time to draw all of these connections.

As I continue to watch the woman stripping, I become distracted by her convulsive movements and tantalizing gestures. I am taken in by the image, and Debord's monotone fades into the background (in my mind). Suddenly, I am shocked out of this complacency once the image cuts to the scene in the subway, and once again I try to match what is being said to what I am seeing, and then I see a television monitor displaying traffic moving through a busy intersection and I hear "...the autonomous movement of the non-living," and the connection is re-established. Aside from the establishment of the spoken words in an authoritative position, this opening sequence reveals a pattern of distraction and attention, of becoming lost in images and then trying to recapture the "explanation." This pattern becomes even more pronounced when the image is a depiction of a familiar event, such as Lee Harvey Oswald's assassination. I find myself gazing intently into the screen, as if I were witnessing the event for the first time (which I may be, considering that I was not born at the time of the event, yet this was not typical for the film's original audience, all of whom would have seen this event as if it were the collapse of the World Trade Center). The emotional content of the event adds significance to the text, just as the bubble captions scrawled over the reproduction of Delacroix's painting in the *SI Journal* borrowed consequence from the stature of the picture. Yet, this heightened significance is also coupled with a heightened state of distraction, for I may look more intensely at the image, and hear less intensely what is being said. Debord seems to be addressing our capacity for reception at its most fundamental level, allowing the multiple inputs to overlap, our level of interest to shift from intense scrutiny to mild distraction. We are made aware, gradually, through repetition, of how we are watching the film, and how we try to assemble meaning from various inputs.

Many of the scenes and relationships that can be discerned in the first minutes of the film recur throughout its entirety, many more are introduced later and also repeated, and still others are singular occurrences. If one is to try to derive a general structure from these many repeated particularities, it may suffice simply to state that the film is structured by repetition. In this simple formulation, even the singular occurrence—for instance the visage of Alice Becker-Ho accompanied by music—can be understood as one unit in a motif of similarly individual units (and, as noted above, there are internal similarities between this singular scene and other, serially-presented scenes). Most obviously, images of similar content are repeated: space walks, nude women, riots. This sort of repetition leads the viewer to begin to see these scenes in the same way, a sort of generalized perception that Benjamin describes as emblematic of modern society. Specific events and particular people become types, and our reception of them becomes stereotyped; we have formed a memory of the image of a previous object, and this memory invades our perception of the new object. "That kind of redundancy of representation, with its accompanying inhibition and impoverishment of memory, was what Benjamin saw as the standardization of perception, or what might be called an effect of spectacle." (Crary 460). Debord illustrates in this way one of the most essential points of his theory, that "All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." Even in our minds, we

cannot separate representations from one another, as one representation bleeds into the next, and we confuse the visage of Debord's close friend, Alice Becker-Ho, with the images of anonymous pin-up girls torn from pornographic magazines, merely because of a similarity of presentation.

Another sort of repetition is thematic repetition, which occurs both in the images and in the text. While one could establish one category of war images and a separate category of riot images, these can be grouped together as images of violence. Likewise, there are similar thematic affiliations within the body Debord's theory. This sort of thematic repetition tends to intensify the imposition of an awareness of temporal continuity onto the spectator. The film seems to progress in cycles: from violence to sex to production to sex, then a pause precipitated by a black screen with a quotation, then another sequence: violence, sex, politics, violence. Such repetition emphatically freezes any sense of narrative progression, causing a consistent awareness of return. Likewise, as Debord's dictation progresses along with the image sequence, he returns consistently to various themes: the spectacle as image, the accumulation of capital, capital accumulated as image. Coupling this sort of cyclical thematic return with the many more localized relationships and specific similarities already noted, the film seems to unfold as a fluid body of associations. The text progresses and returns, relating back to itself even as it relates to the images with which it is paired, or, perhaps, to a previous image which was paired with a thematically similar passage. The images relate to one another in sequence, as types, and as themes, and they relate likewise the text with which they are presented and to that text paired with the images to which they relate. Through repetition, particularities begin to dissolve, and, much as the human memory allows a previous image to infect a future perception, so the film allows its temporally and formally separate parts to bleed together. It would be too much to claim that the film becomes totally without hierarchy, for points of localized emphasis are common, but its overall structure must be seen as somewhat indeterminate, suggesting not the delivery of a fixed message, but a prolonged contemplation on the (unresolved) actions of images and words.

Although the larger part of the film consists of images and spoken text presented simultaneously, there are two special situations which recur throughout the film when this pattern is broken—these are the types of localized emphasis mentioned above. One occurs when text is printed on a black screen in the absence of sound, and the other occurs during longer film clips when the narration ceases and the sound matches the action of the film. The operation of these moments is a sort of punctuation which draws specific attention to the structure of the film. Seeing a text without hearing it dictated has the double function of making one aware that the continuity of the film is provided by the audio track and making one aware that the audio track is a composed, written text. At these moments one is able to completely dissociate text from image, and the formal organization of the film is exposed. The film clips operate in a much different fashion. While the textual pauses are revelatory in a rather straightforward manner, the filmic pauses reveal through their deception. During these pauses the sound of the dictation is replaced by sound which matches the film, implicitly suggesting that the dictation belongs as much to the images over which it is read as the narrative soundtrack belongs to its images. Rather than indicating the separation of the words from the text, as the silent text frames do, the film clips present a false unity. This deception is

amplified by the relief that one feels when the image is again unified with the sound. It is this very relief that is for me the most revelatory aspect of *The Society of the Spectacle*. When one realizes how easily one slips back into the standard "false unity" that characterizes the spectacle, that is, the false unity between form and content, the presentation of a fixed, discernible reality, one truly understands the disturbingly comfortable nature of the spectacle. Disjoined from their original narrative context, these détourned clips are virtually devoid of connotative meaning, like all of the other images presented. However, we are accustomed to comprehending their narrative unity as some sort of complete form of representation, which, here, represents nothing but itself. This paradox reveals another layer of significance in the operation of détournement. At its most essential level, détournement does not make connections which generate new meanings, but disconnects meaning, leaving a gap to be filled.

The film can be comprehended as a reversal of the typical operation of both a film and a photographic image. In discussing the captioned photograph, Barthes states that, "the text is only a kind of secondary vibration, almost without consequence." (*Image-Music-Text* 26). Debord's film, which appears as a series of moving and still images over which a text is read, seems to be similar to the captioned image. Thus, typically we are accustomed to seek initial direction from the picture, and then reassurance from the caption, just as we are accustomed to viewing a film as a sequence of images through which the speaker and the context of what is spoken is understood. In other words, images provide the continuity and the sound supports them. According to Walter Benjamin, the filmic sequence of images itself has almost supplanted the caption in the function of providing direction to the viewer: "The directives which the captions give to those looking at pictures in illustrated magazines soon become even more explicit and more imperative in the film where the meaning of each single picture appears to be prescribed by the sequence of all preceding ones." (226). However, in *The Society of the Spectacle* there is no continuity from one image to the next, and what is spoken (the caption) does not directly refer to what is seen. Although we wish to view and comprehend the film as a narrative sequence, little about its structure would suggest that this is how it is intended to be viewed. We therefore turn to the spoken words to provide continuity, and the images, because of the incomprehensibility of their sequence, take on a secondary role. This reversal of hierarchy also challenges the standard notion of cinematic time. Rather than experiencing the film as a cohesive, progressive narrative, a representation of time that is contained completely within the non-space of the screen, we experience Debord's film in our own real time. Cinematic time becomes both linear and cyclical, progressing in sequence even as it returns to scenes already presented and themes already explored. The spectator must continuously and actively formulate some sort of personal coherence, assembled from memories, from a stream of images, from the words spoken. Cinematic time becomes the time of comprehension of the spectator. While on the one hand this aspect of the film may be understood as one of Debord's tactics to activate the spectator, on the other hand, within the context of the spectacle that is the film, an awareness of time is inevitably false. The time that is removed from the cinema is projected onto the spectator as a "false consciousness of time." (Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 114). We, the spectators, want to be drawn into the film, to participate in a common understanding of these events and images which define our culture. We want to define our own time by these images which have punctuated our lives. Yet Debord refuses us this luxury, relating the images to one another and to his dictation, while our awareness is

focused on how we receive the images, and how the images operate internally, objectively, as images. We are forced to recognize our alienation from these images of our own culture.

If the film can be reduced to a single subject, it would be an awareness of historical time. The *Society of the Spectacle* presents itself as a *dérive* through contemporary world as presented by the media. Whereas the physical *dérive* through the city hinged on the hope of assembling a unified, personal significance out of the disparate, alien components of the city, this passive *dérive* through culture presents nothing complete, yet asks the viewer to assemble an understanding of his or her place in this culture. Through the bombardment of images, accompanied by Debord's commentary, one become conscious of trying to place oneself within the trajectory presented, and of the futility of this attempt. We begin to understand our viewing of these images as spectatorship of culture rather than participation in it, and thus become aware of our own lives as spectators. Despite all of the potency of its contents, *The Society of the Spectacle* is more a meditation on signification than on significance.

"...we can perhaps do better than to take stock directly of the ideological contents of our age; by trying to reconstitute in its specific structure the code of connotation of a mode of communication as important as the press photograph we may hope to find, in their very subtlety, the forms our society uses to ensure its peace of mind and to grasp thereby the magnitude, the detours and the underlying function of that activity." (Barthes, *Image-Music-Text* 31).

Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

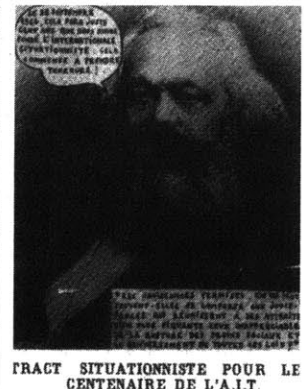


Figure 7

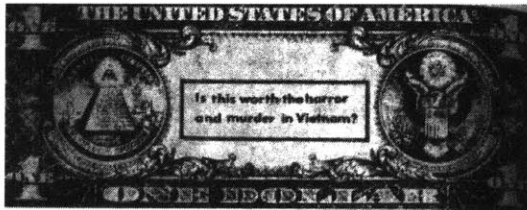
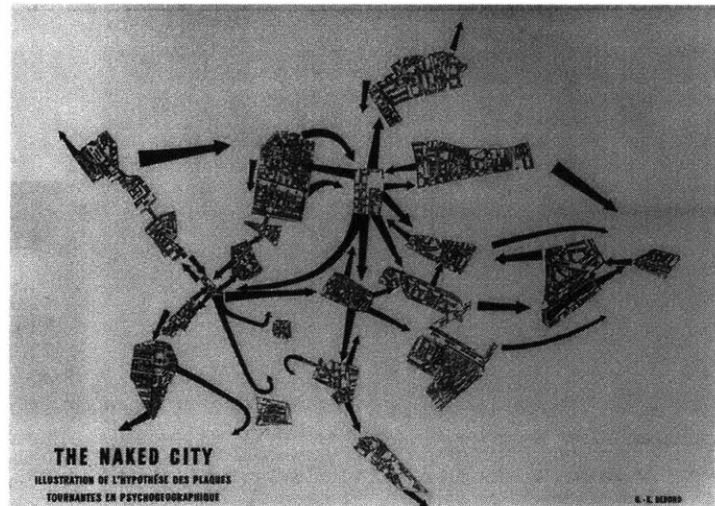


Figure 8 (Sadler)



Figures 1-7 from Debord, Guy, Ed. *Internationale Situationniste 1959-68*

Figure 9 (Levin)



Opening Sequence of *The Society of the Spectacle* (film stills)



Stills from *The Society of the Spectacle*

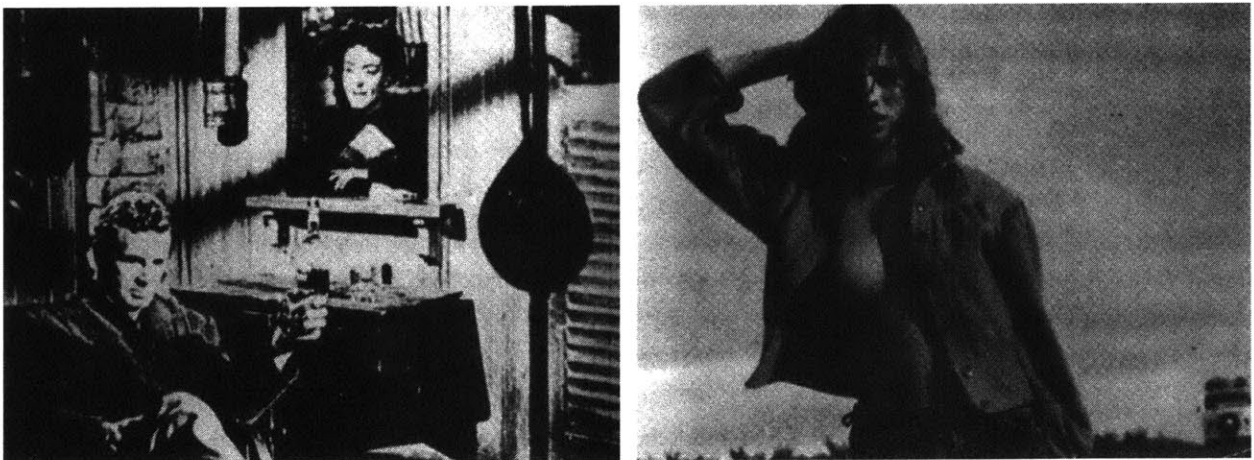
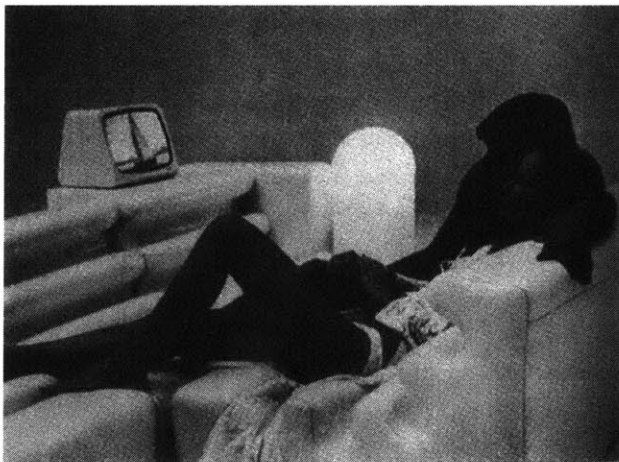


Figure 10 (Levin)



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All images by author unless otherwise noted

Opposite side: Film Still from *The Lady from Shanghai*

