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Brutalism, Film, and Dystopia: The Many (Cinematic) Lives of John Andrews's Scarborough **College**

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Since its opening to the public in 1965, John Andrews's megastructure Scarborough College —currently University of Toronto, Scarboroughhas received universal acclaim. Praised by Kenneth Frampton as "by far the most daring, comprehensive and radical... of all the completed university complexes of recent years", Scarborough has enjoyed, unlike many other brutalist structures, a peaceful and successful existence: untainted by later extensions, the Andrews Building, as it is known today, has not only survived, but become the revered core of a landmark university campus. However, adding to its prosperous history as a university facility, Scarborough has also led a prolific double life as a filming location, lending its architectural persona to an assortment of evil corporations, futuristic prisons, or government facilities. This article examines some of the many appearances of Scarborough on the screen, and the different ways in which cinema has depicted, appropriated, recontextualized, transformed, and even extended the building beyond Andrews's original design and its as-built reality.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Cine, Megaestructuras, Arquitectura Educativa, Ficción, Edificios Universitarios

Cinema, Megastructures, Educational Architecture, Fiction, University Buildings

In the late 1960s, the general public's opinion of modern architecture reached its nadir at the same time brutalism hit peak popularity among architects. If modernism's utopian ideas were "originally seen to reflect the democratic attitudes of a powerful civic expression -authenticity, honesty, directness, and strength", it eventually "came to

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signify precisely the opposite: hostility, coldness, inhumanity", and cinema helped cement this new meaning! Stanley Kubrick's 1971 adaptation of Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) took this perception a step further, helping establish the marriage of brutalism and bleak, futuristic dystopias in our collective imagination. Nevertheless, Kubrick was hardly the first to use modernist architecture to represent totalitarian or asphyxiating futures: Jean-Luc Godard had already transformed Paris into a technologically driven dystopia in *Alphaville* (1965), and François Truffaut followed suit in 1966 with his adaptation of Ray Bradbury's *Farenheit 451* (1953), filmed on London's *Alton Estate*. Even George Lucas, also in 1971, turned some of L. A.'s modern buildings into the alienating future of *THX 1138*.

A Clockwork Orange did, however, capture the dystopian ethos of brutalist structures as no other film had done before, and did so in a surprisingly economical way. In its most common understanding as 'concrete, late-modernism', 'brutalism2' is represented by a mere two structures in the film: the still under construction 'housing megastructure' of *Thamesmead Estate*, and a fleeting glimpse of the recently completed lecture block on the new Brunel University campus3. The iconic images of both buildings came to represent the film as a whole, especially the latter. As the image of the *Ludovico Medical Facility*, a centre that specialized in the application of aversion therapy of the socially conflictive, it became charged with an additional subtext. The presence of the lecture block is unsurprising, though. Kubrick did some thorough research in architectural magazines, seeking locations close to his own house in London, and, as Paul V. Turner explained in Campus: An American Planning Tradition (1987), the exponential increase in universities' population in the 1960s resulted in a parallel boom in the construction of new university facilities and even completely new universities, which made them very handy for Kubrick's purposes.

New higher education programmes called for student and faculty exchange, interdisciplinarity, research and development, as well as the continuous possibility of evolution. This philosophy perfectly complemented the preoccupations of the period's architectural thinking, resulting in a proliferation of educational facilities that adopted the brutalist aesthetic in its many facets and forms. However, whilst brutalist buildings kept appearing in films from the 1970s onwards —usually as a token for dystopian futures and lending their oppressively perceived architecture to police headquarters, government facilities, military compounds, or ominous corporations— university buildings were, but for a few examples, conspicuously absent⁴, with two notable exceptions: the 'megastructural⁵' campuses of the Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, by Arthur Erickson and George Massey (1963-1965), and John Andrews's Scarborough College in Toronto (fig. 01), whose success in real life extended to the many *alternate lives* it has led in film⁶.

THE FUTURE HAS ALREADY BEEN: SCARBOROUGH COLLEGE AND THE FUTURE Like James Stirling before him, Andrews strongly objected in his later years to Scarborough being classified as 'brutalist'⁷. It is difficult, nevertheless, not to link Scarborough's inner, multi-levelled 'streets' to neo-brutalist strategies, or to frame it within the megastructural fever of the

late 1960s, as Banham himself certified in his treatise on the subject8. An-

Fig. 01
Original Master Plan for Scarborough
College, Phase 1 (1963). On the lower right,
configuration for 5,000 students, with
two supplementary wings and student
residences added on the ends of the
original building.

drews would surely not have objected to the almost universal praise it got from his peers and critics. Completed in less than two years, Andrews's 'Monumental Folly'9 was immediately hailed as an educational and architectural achievement, and the media loved it. It was featured not only in the main architectural magazines, adding to some local ones, but also in mainstream journals such as Time (twice) and Harper's 10. After a visit to the campus, Montreal architect Ray Affleck wrote that "Scarborough College is not only a building —it is an event... of considerable significance for both the architectural profession and the public at large... that comes to grips with a whole raft of contemporary urban problems, possibilities and potentials."11 Even Kenneth Frampton, in a rather passive-aggressive review for Architectural Design, conceded that "of all the completed university complexes of recent years it is by far the most daring, comprehensive and radical, and as such merits serious critical attention"12. Similar praise came from everywhere else: Scarborough seemed an appropriately forward-thinking form to house what was intended as a future-looking pedagogic program¹³.

There was certainly something intrinsically futuristic about Scarborough. With its sloping facades, external ducts, chimneys, protruding volumes, "aggressive asymmetry" 14, and non-orthogonal geometries, the University of Toronto satellite campus¹⁵ sat on its pastoral surroundings like a futuristic fortress, or, perhaps, an alien (mega)structure of the kind late-1970s films would depict traveling the vastness of deep space¹⁶. It also housed a pioneering pedagogical design based on the use of closed-circuit TV (CCTV). Frampton pointed out that "Scarborough must be rated a technical achievement at the educational level. It is packed with electronic equipment"17. Lecture halls, theatres, and laboratories were equipped with rear projection screens for the simultaneous presentation of films and slides, and additional TV monitors along the side aisles of the bigger classrooms, among other novelties. The building even included a core TV studio with several others scattered throughout, ensuring that 11 instructional programmes could be simultaneously relayed to 50 separate classrooms at a time when "it was anticipated that at least one-half of all the teaching would be delivered by television"18. In the years after the completion of Phase 1, Scarborough went through many possible futures¹⁹: plans and buildings came and went, and if the 'Andrews Building, as the linked volumes of the Humanities Wing, Meeting Place, and Science Wing are known today, still stands in all its futuristic glory, the campus itself, with its different additions, remains unusually close to Andrews's original intentions²⁰ (fig. 01, 02).

Not everything was equally utopian, though. Although *The Canadian Architect* underlined that the realized buildings "form a central academic space, a formal, dignified hub of college activity" ²¹, Andrews's original plan was never completed (fig. 02). Further extensions that would have added student housing to the original structure to turn it into a residential campus (fig. 01) —a fundamental requirement for a satellite campus 30 Kilometres away from downtown Toronto— also remained unbuilt²². The student's journal, the aptly-named *Marooned*, often dealt with the issue of identity that being so far from the university's core posed²³. The TV experiment also failed; the students rebelled, claiming that "the new educational objectives and desires, ran contrary to the concept of mechanized, standardized instruction"²⁴, and at least one critic defined his initial feeling when visiting the campus "as not so much



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Fig. 02 Satellite view of the campus as of 2023.

the glimpse of a place of learning as a sinister Orwellian block in which people are persuaded that two and two make five"25. As it would later turn out, this was a rather prescient insight, considering some of the building's filmic futures.

ONE: EVERYDAY DYSTOPIAS: ALIENATION AND THE SINGLE-BUILDING CAMPUS. (DIFFERENT SHADES OF GRAY-ISH) Scarborough premiered early in dystopian cinema as the backdrop for David Cronenberg's Bergman-inspired opera prima *Stereo* (1969). Filmed in an oppressive black and white, and almost qualifying as a silent film, *Stereo* inaugu-

rated the 'evil technological corporation' sub-section of Scarborough's filmic history. Itself quite experimental in nature, the film recounted an experiment with human patients whose ability to speak is surgically removed to force them to develop telepathic abilities. *Stereo* introduced many themes that were to run through all Cronenberg's subsequent cinematography: the symbiosis between mind, body, sexuality, and technology, in an increasingly technologized world. These dominate the second half of the film. Fed with aphrodisiac drugs by a mostly invisible —but audible— group of scientists, the patients' telepathic powers blossom by engaging in polymorphous sex, ultimately antagonizing each other, exerting violence, and, in two cases, committing suicide.

Transformed into the resounding Canadian Academy of Erotic Enquiry, Scarborough stands for the 'increasingly technologized world', with its CCTV system and its rich, micro-urban interior, transformed from a pedagogical technology/environment into an oppressive architecture of control. This almost perfect symbiosis was not accidental: as Cronenberg later recounted,

"I structured the film around the architecture... [t]he emptiness allowed me to completely see this structure in an abstract way, because they [sic] were not inhabited yet (...). That attributed to the tone — the loneliness, the smallness of human beings... The relationship of technology with human beings has always interested me, and you have to think of architecture as an expression of technology"²⁸.

The still-pristine Andrews Building offered Cronenberg, himself a University of Toronto alumnus, an ideal and comprehensive environment that anchored the thin plot, combining it with a voiceover filled with pseudo-scientific jargon that tied the fragmentary and abstract narrative together, while helping situate it in an indeterminate but suitably futuristic scenario. Filmed with a noisy 35mm Arriflex 2C camera and an estimated budget of 3,500 Canadian dollars, Cronenberg's documentary-style filming made the building appear as big, rough, and inhuman, with its zigzagging inner streets convincingly presenting it as a labyrinthine, disorienting, continuous interior. Defamiliarization stemmed from the empty state in which it was filmed: a city-building, thought to be populated literally by thousands, was portrayed devoid of people (fig. 03), and the lack of texture that the human element would have provided reinforced the coldness of its surfaces and resulted in an appropriately inhumane and alienating landscape, conveying a similar sense of alienation as George Lucas's subsequent THX 1138 (1971)27. Cronenberg nevertheless featured a very 'matter-of-fact' documentation of the building that eschewed revelling in the monumentalist representation that the building lends itself to. Three years earlier, CBC aired a 30-minute documentary



Cronenberg's architectural tour in *Stereo* (1969).

Scarborough in the first minutes of James Acland's 1966 documentary, which could perfectly work as an introductory scene to Cronenberg's film.

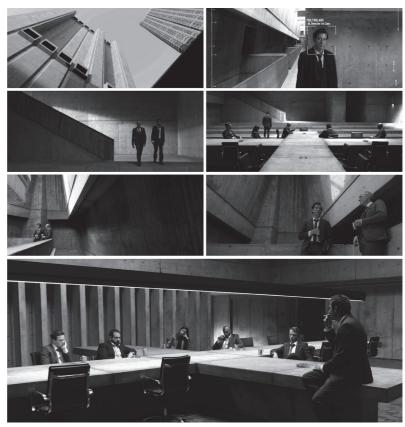
on the construction and opening of Scarborough College whose shots, also in black and white, showed the building 'as is' and could have perfectly belonged in Stereo²⁸ (fig. 04). Like THX, Stereo finds its feel of dystopian asphyxiation in its combination of the extraordinary —alienation in architecturally enclosed worlds— and the mundane, with an added feeling of estrangement supplied by Cronenberg's clinical, dispassionate filming.

Half a century later, Andrew Niccol's Anon (2018) would

somehow counterbalance this by introducing a Scarborough *dop*pelganger that offset Cronenberg's unmonumental portrayal. Set in

Fig. 05
The lush presentation of the building's interior spaces in Anon (2018), with the addition of some concrete furniture and wall structures at the meeting place.

a dystopian surveillance state where the authorities can record and access every citizen's visual and auditive perceptions, the building is transplanted to New York, improbably recontextualized as the interior space of John Carl Warnecke's (1969-1974) towering AT&T Long Lines Building, a common substitute for secretive corporations in film where it was also trans-programmed into an equally improbably grandiose —and empty—police headquarters²⁹ (fig. 05). Niccol underlines the feeling of alienation-by-scale, taking advantage of both the endless balconies of the Humanities Wing, with its tilted walls, and the vastness of the Meeting Place, playing the role of an inhumanely scaled interrogation room. However, in a world where all advertising is digital, and streets devoid of any signage feel artificially and disquietingly mute, Scarborough does not feel particularly alienating. On the contrary, Director of Photography Amir Mokri's choice to shoot the film with a "desaturated, stone-gray" palette, "where the police station looks more like a barren temple"30 has an interestingly and intense glamourizing effect on the building (also aided by the minimalist, pristine added furniture), especially if compared with Cronenberg's blurry, home video-style take. Rather than a massive, crude concrete hulk, Scarborough's surfaces look crisp, exact, with the abstract, mathematical weightlessness and sharpness of a CGI model that makes them counterintuitively comforting and uncharacteristically gentle. Fifty years after completion, Anon's near-future Scarborough looks as sharp —and futuristic— as ever.



TWO: ANY COLOUR YOU LIKE (DYSTOPIAN BLUES)

"...to visit Scarborough College is to participate in an experience that is multi-dimensional and multi-sensual (...)³¹⁹

A similar soothing ability can be found in Denis Villeneuve's *Enemy* (2013), where Scarborough

poses as a slightly fictionalized version of itself, the *UGT* (University of Greater Toronto) *Social Sciences Building* (fig. 06). Fully shot in a highly stylized Toronto, the film deals with a frustrated college History professor, Adam Bell (Jake Gyllenhaal) who becomes obsessed with an actor who is his physical doppelganger. Exuding a subdued, but, perhaps because of that, *asphyxiating* dystopian feel³², the *reel* version of an otherwise very real Toronto is filmed with a ubiquitous amber tint. A city of suffocating smog built entirely with vistas of its real self, it becomes a place of Ballardian, alienating corporate-modern uniformity. Scarborough stands out, surprisingly playing against type, as one of its more humane spots: with the roughness of its grey surfaces softened by the overall yellowish patina, its scale skilfully attenuated through camera settings and shot-framing, and surrounded by vegetation, Scarborough becomes here a somewhat amiable oasis amongst the many other buildings and sites featured throughout the film, always shown at their most depersonalizing.

In terms of role, image, and especially *colour, Enemy's* is however, a *tonal* rarity in the filmic representation of Scarborough. Throughout its multiple appearances, the building has succumbed to the typical cross/trans-programming, as defined by Bernard Tschumi³³, in order to represent an array of ominous institutions. Different visual strategies are employed to underline its disquieting features: the coldness denoted by its concrete surfaces is often enhanced by desaturating colours, usually veering towards the current trend for steel or cobalt blue tones³⁴. Its inner massing is sometimes filmed cast in dark shadows that underline its oppressive, labyrinthine nature, while its massive outer

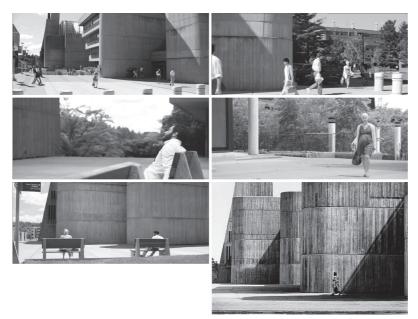


Fig. 06
Scarborough as a modern(ist) garden of Eden in *Enemy* (2013). At the bottom, right, a comparison with the rough and monumental portrayal of the same spot

by photographer David Moore (1970).

volumes are shown in low-angle, dwarfing shots. Different variations on these can be found in the supernatural TV series *Shadowhunters* (2016-2019), where the Meeting Place and the environs of the North entrance, shot at night and covered in a Blade-Runner-esque rain, play the role of an again improbably colossal *NY Police 89th Precinct*, or in another Canadian sci-fi show, *Impulse* (2018-2019). Its episode *Vita/Mors* granted the viewer an unusual walk through its roof which, with some superimposed CGI antennae, became the reasonably futuristic *Gravitational Wave Observatory* 35.

A good summary of this aesthetics, which pervade today's portrayals of dystopian futures can be found in Ramin Bahrani's 2018 reimagining of Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, which also exemplifies the sensibility changes from the 1960s to today. Godard's version, filmed closer to the time the book was written, used an example of high modernism, such as the housing blocks at Alton West, Roehampton, with only a few props added to visually introduce the futuristic element. Shot with a naturalistic style by future-director Nicholas Roeg, the washed-out look of the British weather coupled with the casual banality of the interiors, the clothing, and hairstyles to subtly imbue the viewer with the feel of -very Englishquiet desperation of a dystopian future that was already here. Bahrani's revision goes in a completely different direction, substituting the subdued alienation of the everyday for high-tech spectacle. Less prone to filming domestic spaces and more inclined to intimidate the viewer with the imposing headquarters of the repressive (fire)arm of the state, Bahrani goes through all of Scarborough's usual beats: the massive North Entrance, the main lecture theatre, and the several levels of corridors in the Science Wing, now housing changing rooms and armouries behind metal grilles. Shot entirely at night, with its concrete surfaces bathed by a bluish patina sparsely lit with red and yellow neon lights, Scarborough looks adequately dark and ominous —if somewhat under-scaled— as the image of a fascistic state³⁶ that "censors and bastardizes art it finds troublesome", while "most of the populace has been voluntarily anesthetized by mass media designed to give them exactly what they want."36 Looking beautiful, if clichéd —as does the screenplay itself— the film's redeeming features are its unusual top-down views of the stairs and an opening dolly shot that captures the Meeting Place — now a boxing ring— in its full height and glory. Echoes of Kubrick's sub-text reappear, when a real-life learning facility gets re-signified as a training place for an army of civil servants devoted to the erasure of knowledge.

Last, but certainly not least in this group, would be Guillermo del Toro's 2017 *The Shape of Water*, where, again transplanted to a US location —Baltimore— again posing as a secretive and shadier government facility, the fictional *OCCAM Aerospace Research Center* (fig. 07), Scarborough donned the blue patina of dystopia. This time, however, architect-turned-production designer Paul Austerberry's team went much further than adding cosmetic elements to the existing building. Originally envisioned in black and white (which would have created an interesting resonance with *Stereo*³⁸), the final use of "steel blue and fine greens", also a trademark of Del Toro's filmography, was applied not only to the featured building's locations, which provided "the façade and entrance for" an "underworld lab³⁹" but also to a whole array of new interior spaces, built in sound stages, that absorbed some of Scarborough's mannerisms and expanded on its architectural lexicon. Digging into its



Fig. 07
A mostly real Scarborough posing as the OCCAM facility (top row) versus studio sets made to look as the interiors of the Andrews Building in The Shape of Water (2017).

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design philosophy in order to extend its innards in plausible directions⁴⁰, the film's 'production of space' achieves the unusual feat of presenting the viewer with a diverging Scarborough that yet does not feel out of place, making it difficult, even for the trained eye, to tell the real from the —speculative— simulation⁴¹.

THREE: APPROPRIATE(D)
BRUTALISM AND DIGITAL
AFTERLIFES [REALITY
AS A SPRINGBOARD]:
ADDITIONS,
DESTRUCTIONS,
EXPANSES,
CONDENSATIONS

A similar strategy can be found in one the friendlier depictions in this group: *Hannibal* (2013-2015), where the Humanities Wing doubles as the exterior of the FBI Academy and the BAU (*Behavioral Analysis Unit*) in Quantico (Virginia). The series mostly features Scarborough's exterior through cold and motionless, low-angle establishing shots of different corners of the

building silhouetted against steel-blue skies⁴². The first episode, however, presented an unusually warm view of the building: an establishing shot where the camera follows the characters walking past the Humanities Wing. Amongst its verdant surroundings, with the scale of the building at its most humane, and the bunker-like auditoria softened by vegetation that has picturesquely overgrown them, Scarborough looks, as in *Enemy*, like a fortress growing amidst a green Eden. Also like in *Enemy*, this somewhat domestic scene is succeeded by another one showing the modestly scaled corridor of the Sciences Wing. However, this time, the show moves seamlessly to studio sets from this point on.

Using a common trope of cinema, production designer Matthew Davies extrapolates from these two vistas of Scarborough and induces a whole set of other spaces that turn the interior of Andrews's building into a labyrinthine yet orderly matrix of labs, meeting rooms, conference and briefing rooms, corridors, and offices. Borrowing just a few textural elements from the building's repertoire of glass, concrete, steel and wood, Davies creates *an other* cognitive-dissonance-inducing Scarborough⁴³ (fig. 08). With its modular space of concrete pillars, wood panelling, and trunk-pyramidal ceilings, *Hannibal* expands its catalogue of interior environments in a way that could have perfectly fitted the North buildings of the campus, had they been built as Andrews planned. Thus, *Hannibal* grants the viewer with an experience —paraphrasing Giuliana

Fig. 08 Concept art (top left) and the many variations of Scarborough's fictional Kahn-ian interiors in *Hannibal* (2013-2015).



Bruno— of the Scarborough of a space-time *that could have been*, also providing a possibly unintended but interesting architectural subtext: with these concrete, modular spaces, the designers fill in the missing link between Scarborough and the work of Louis Kahn, an early influence on Andrews which is absent from this particular work⁴⁴.

The advent of digital imaging has made this appropriation and reinvention of existing structures much easier and more frequent, and Scarborough, as seen above, is no exception. Amongst the variety of ways in which it has been appropriated, we could list its brief appearance as the Westhole Prison in SyFy's Killjoys (2015-1945) where it only appears in two static shots which, nonetheless, stand out for providing an attractive instance of Sontag-infused 'imagination of disaster 46 through a digital matte painting that shows the building in a derelict state, in full Joseph Gandy /John Soane' tradition⁴⁷. A favourite location, the Meeting Place has also been subject to different forays into the future. In what could be considered a glorified cameo, it was featured in Len Wiseman's 2012 Total Recall remake, playing the part of the Asian Station of the globe-crossing transportation system known as The Fall. Crammed with props and people, both real and digital, the inner plaza is almost unrecognizable, especially when the inward-looking meeting place is denaturalized by means of digital augmentation that turns its opaque concrete perimeter into wall-sized windows looking onto the futuristic cityscape outside. An opposite approach can be seen in Paul W. S. Anderson's 2010 Resident Evil: Afterlife, where it discretely plays —almost to the point of going unnoticed even for the knowledgeable spectator—the central role of the cafeteria at the bottom of a prison's inner courtyard. With minimal dressing, the look of the space does not greatly deviate from its real self until the camera moves upwards to reveal that it has been dramatically extruded vertically, with the addition of countless storeys with balconies locked behind iron bars.

Scarborough's exteriors have also been subject to processes of digital augmentation or condensation, which either expand

or concentrate Andrews's design, either building upon or opposing its growth logic. The first group includes the simple —yet particularly relevant for the purpose of this article— reinterpretation shown in the TV series *The Expanse*. Set in the mid-24th century, the show depicts a future where the Solar System has been partially colonized, amidst a cold-war scenario with Earth and Mars representing the two main competing superpowers. In this context, where the positions of the United Nations, and the Martian Congressional Republic can be roughly assimilated to the 20th century's USA and USSR respectively, Scarborough plays the role of the Martian Embassy, its severe and overpowering concrete massing embodying, one guesses, a certain futuristic ideal of cold, Soviet-era architecture, and the show makes extensive use of some of the building's most imposing spots⁴⁸.

The defamiliarization kicks in when, first through a window, then when exiting the building, we discover that Scarborough has been transplanted not only from downtown Toronto to a future New York, but also from its bucolic ecosystem to a cold urban context: enclosed by a high wall, fully paved in concrete, practically devoid of any vegetation, and surrounded by similarly sterile structures. Of more interest is the way in which this scene has been constructed, revealing, in the middle ground, a cityscape consisting of bits and pieces of the Andrews building that have been put together to effectively —and finally— extend the building beyond its currently incomplete state. Very much like in Ivor De Wolfe and Kenneth Browne's 1971 collage-city *Civilia*, the designers take advantage of the most basic tool of photographic imaging: expanding through *repetition* they treat the viewer with impactful vistas of a mirrored Science Wing that show glimpses of what a megastructural expansion of Scarborough might have offered⁴⁹ (fig. 09).

"To stand in front of the College... is a revealing experience. The controversial chimneys (...), and the massive use of poured-in-place concrete endow the building with a sense of foreboding" 50

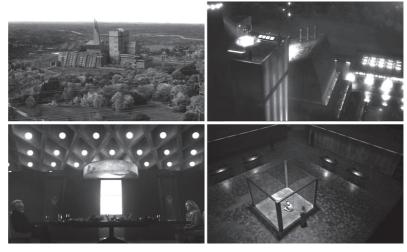


Fig. 09

The expanse (2017) combines several images of the actual Andrews building with a true megastructural expansion of it via digital means.

Fig. 10

The Handmaid's Tale's (2021) cubistic apocope of the original building, echoed later in a rooftop scene (top, left), versus the lush —if agoraphobic— depiction of its actual inner spaces.



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An opposite use of appropriation-by-collage is featured in The Handmaid Tale's episode 'The Crossing' (2021⁵¹), where Scarborough once again stands as a maximum-security prison. Presumably located in Toronto, the building provides several of its oft-featured interior spaces, with the addition of the windowless underground rooms of the Science Wing, which double as prisoner cells and torture chambers. It would be difficult to argue against the building's suitability to recreate Orwellian atmospheres, as shown in a water-boarding scene that mixes glimpses of Winston Smith's mental destruction at the hands of O'Brien in 1984 with echoes of Guantanamo Bay. Equally effective is its depiction of the Meeting Place: presented in an immaculate state, its disquieting emptiness is emphasized by the insertion of a glass cube at its bottom displaying Hannah, the protagonist's daughter, as part of the torture process. It also features a welcomed addition to Scarborough's filmic history: a scene shot in the ballroom-like dining hall on the third floor, which appears as a both beautiful, yet suffocatingly empty venue for a dinner for two.

The episode's biggest contribution, however, is not in its otherwise compelling surgical exploration of the dystopian side of real Scarborough's inner spaces, but in its reinvention of the building as a whole: prior to entering the building, the episode presents the viewer with a digital architectural folly (fig. 10) which, instead of extending the building, compresses it, in a sort of cubist portrait. In his review, Frampton had underlined the picturesqueness of Andrews's design, a zigzagging form that adapted to its surroundings where "one has only to add the vestigial campanile of the chimney shaft, and the 'hilltown' is complete 52." Here, the designers take an opposite stance, and eschew the building's horizontality, making its central area grow upwards in the form of two facing towers, and adding different elements taken from the menu of 'tasty bits' offered by the campus. The cascade of the Science Wing's Southern façade and its external ducts, the blocky volumes of the more modestly shaped Bladen Wing, the pitched roofs of the erstwhile Bladen Library, or the machinery-intense roof of the administration building, all converge on top of an orthogonal layout that appears as a condensed vision of the campus as a whole. A mannerist exercise again in full Civilian fashion⁵³,

the result looks like a 19th-century piece by Alexander 'Greek' Thompson in which his characteristic eclecticism was restrained to a single referent; or, perhaps, like the product of an *AI* image generated from a prompt including 'Scarborough', 'brutalism', and 'prison', ultimately creating a Baudrillardian *simulacrum* which is simultaneously similar and distinct from itself.

END? THE [B]ORDERS OF SIMULACRA

In his analysis of the global influence of Japanese anime, Toshiya Ueno argued that if "Japan is... located geographically, as Jean Baudrillard once said, as a satellite in orbit" it is "also... chronologically... located in the future

of technology"⁵⁴. A secretive state-of-the art technological government lab from the 1950s-60s, a contemporary university, a run-down prison in a futuristic present, a near-future police station, or an embassy from the 24th Century - Scarborough epitomizes brutalism's ability to stay permanently installed in the dystopian future of our (filmic) collective imagination. Celebrated at the time it was completed, and embraced by its users through the decades, Scarborough College was never finished as Andrews imagined it. It was, as Oscar Newman remarked in 1966, "a beginning rather than a culmination"⁵⁵. Cinema seemingly agreed, making it an example of permanence, but also of the many alternative lives that buildings can lead through their various appropriations, once architects leave the scene. What other new evolutions, metamorphoses, or reinventions might Andrews's megastructure spawn, what new architectural personae it may transform into, and what other alternate lives it is yet to live, only the future can say. RA

Notes

01. KUBO, Michael; GRIMLEY, Chris; PASNIK, Mark, "Brutal" in *OLOG: Brutalism,* edited by Kyle May, and Julia Van Den Hout. New York, Clog, 2013, p. 166.

- 02. The authors would like to note that the term 'brutalism' throughout this article ascribes to the aforementioned 'conventional' use of it to describe late modernist buildings, typically built from the early 1960s through the late 1970s, and mainly with concrete structures and finishes. The purpose of the text is to discuss the appropriation of these structures by cinema, and, in this sense, Scarborough College typically falls under the 'brutalist' label. For the original discussion on the term, and the architectural qualities it was meant to embody, we cannot but suggest reding Reyner Banham's "The New Brutalism" (The Architectural Review, vol. 118 no. 708, December 1955, pp. 355-61), and his subsequent The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic? (London, The Architectural Press, 1966). The same applies to the word 'megastructure', as explained later in this
- **03.** See: BANHAM, P. Reyner, Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past, London, Thames and Hudson, 1976, pp. 190-92.
- 04. Among the few we have been able to locate are Walter Netsch's Chicago Circle Campus (currently University of Illinois at Chicago), still at a time where its elevated streets made it sufficiently megastructural, which appeared as the background of horror film Candyman (1992), and, more recently, in sci-fi TV shows Sense8 (2015-18), Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams (2017-18), and Rupert Wyatt's 2019 dystopian film Captive State. James Stirling's 1967 Andrew Melville Hall at the University of St Andrews was also recently repurposed in Mark Romanek's 2010 Never Let Me Go as the Dover Recovery Centre, a medical facility where clones' organs are harvested in a bleak alternative present.
- **05.** As with 'brutalist', the use of the term 'megastructure' must be taken with some reservation here. Banham himself provided a rather clear definition of the features a megastructure must possess in order to be considered as such (see *Megastructure*, pp. 70-71), The definition, taken from librarian Ralph Wilcoxon, was also highly restrictive; so much so that it made it impossible for

any built examples to be identified as such. This did not stop Banham from using it with some latitude, and apply it to certain reallife buildings or building compounds, such as Scarborough College. In fact, he started Chapter 6, "Megacity Montreal" stating that "1967 also gave us Scarborough College (...), the most immediately striking of all academic megastructures" (p. 105).

- 06. Scarborough's construction took place, as Paolo Scrivano and Mary Louise Lobsinger note, "during a period of unprecedented enthusiasm for and activism towards university expansion throughout Canada." (SCRIVANO, Paolo; LOBSINGER, Mary Lou, "Experimental Architecture. Progressive Pedagogy: Scarborough College", in Architecture and Ideas, vol. 8 no. 1, 2008, pp. 4-19), which resulted, as Banham would recount later. in several experiments with megaform. Adding to Scarborough and the SFU in Burnaby, British Columbia, Erickson and Massey also produced the master plan for the University of Lethbridge (1967), and John Andrews and his team proposed an equally megastructurally master plan for the other satellite college of the University of Toronto in Erindale, which was ultimately discarded and taken over by Moriyama architects whose own proposal leaned on the megastructural, nevertheless.
- 07. Andrews seemed to identify such tag with 'brutal' or 'brutish': "I object quite strongly to the word 'brutalist'. It isn't brutal. Scarborough College is a very human building." When asked what term he would prefer to be labelled under, he answered: "If there was such a word, 'appropriatism.' What I'm always trying to do is find the logical answer to things, and at the time when I was, if you like, being brutal, it was the logical answer." WOODWORD, Berton, "'Brutalist'? Architect behind U of T Scarborough's Science and Humanities Wing didn't think so." University of Toronto Scarborough News. Tuesday, March 29, 2022 [online: https://utsc.utoronto.ca/news-events/ourcommunity/remembering-architect-behindu-t-scarboroughs-iconic-brutalist-building].
- **08.** In Chapter 7 of *Megastructure*, "Megastructure in Academe" (pp. 163), Reyner Banham noted that, on the one hand, "the institutionalization of megastructure as an 'idea in good currency' was overwhelmingly the work of the architecture schools and universities", and, on the other,

- how "in practice... most of the opportunities to work on this scale... were for the design of new campuses or the reworking of old ones." On page 133, caption 134, he insisted that "Scarborough was recognized as a megastructure almost as soon as the word became available to describe it", even if "by comparison [with other pseudo-megastructural Canadian examples, such as the Centennial Hall extension for the University of Winnipeg], Scarborough was something of a primitive" (p. 139).
- **09.** The expression was coined by Peter Hall not referring specifically to Scarborough, but rather to criticize the megastructural movement, which he had experienced in Canada's 1967 Montreal Universal Exhibition. (HALL, Peter, "Monumental Folly", in *New Society*, October 24, 1968, pp. 602-603)
- 10. Among the architectural media that featured the project at the time of its design and construction, we can list the Royal Institute of Canadian Architects Journal (July 1964), The Canadian Architect (September 1964, May 1965), Architectural Design (April 1967), Landscape Architecture Magazine (April, 1966), Architectural Forum (May 1966), The Architectural Review (October, 1966), Architectural Record (September 1966, November 1966), John Donat's World Archilecture V3 (1966). the Canadian Architect Yearbook (1966) L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui (December 1966/January 1967), RIBA Journal (April 1967), Architecture Canada (September 1967), and Progressive Architecture (July 1968). Mentions in non-architectural media include College & University Business (1968), and, of course, the many mentions in The Varsity, the Alumni Association of the University of Toronto. [William E. Beckel's "Teaching '67," the Varsity Graduate, vol. 13, June 1967, p. 62; Bond, Tony. "TV College makes history." The Varsity 85, nº. 2, September 22, 1965, 1; "New U of T college opens today." The Varsity 85, no. 1, September 20, 1965, 1].
- **11.** N/A, "Scarborough College, Ontario", *The Canadian Architect*, vol. 11 no. 5, May 1, 1966, p. 43.
- **12.** FRAMPTON, Kenneth, "Scarborough College. Toronto, Ontario", in *Architectural Design*, April 1967, pp. 178-187.
- **13.** Oscar Newman wrote an enthusiastic review, concluding that Scarborough

transcended "the simple problem of campus to indicate directly the form of our future multi-functional, high density urban cores." NEWMAN, Oscar, "The New Campus" in *Architectural Forum*, vol. 124 no 4, New York, May 1966, pp. 53/30.

- **14.** N/A, "Colleges: 'a satellite built for tv'", in *Time magazine*, vol. 89, n°. 2, January 13, 1967, pp. 32-35.
- 15. Both Erindale and Scarborough were conceived as satellite campuses of the University of Toronto, built to accommodate an estimated expansion in enrolment from 20,000 full-time students to 35,000 by 1970. Scarborough was designed to open with 500 students, which would become 1500 in 1967, and 5000 to 6000 in 1972.
- 16. A comment along these lines can be found in DREW, Philip, "John Andrews: The Early Years Canadian Breakthrough". John Andrews Symposium, David Caro Building, University of Melbourne, Saturday October 20, 2012. The author introduces as well other architecturally pedigreed futurist connections to Antonio Sant'Ellia's Cittá Nuova
- 17. FRAMPTON, K., op. cit., p. 186.
- **18.** SCRIVANO, P.; LOBSINGER, M.L., op. cit., p. 8.
- 19. As Scrivano and Lobsinger point out, there were many different ideas for the campus expansion: "It appears difficult to identify with precision the different phases of the college's planning conception or the several options that were taken into consideration What exists today in built form corresponds only to 'stage one', that is: the arrangement for 1500 students." SCRIVANO, P.; LOBSINGER, M.L., op. cit., p. 11.
- 20. Andrews's plan previewed, adding to the Humanities and Sciences Wings, and administration area, a library and an athletic centre with a pool and several gymnasiums, a skating and ice hockey rink. These and other facilities were built in the Northern area of the campus, even though not rigorously following Andrews's original positions, massing, or aesthetics. For a recount of the history of the college: see: BALL, John L., *The First Twenty-*Five Years, 1964-1989. Scarborough College, University of Toronto, Scarborough, University of Toronto, 1989.

- 21. The Canadian Architect, speaking about the still-under-construction project, underlined that "the expansion program is such that it must be implemented over a long period (...) In this case, from 500 students to 5,000 in 1972. The initial phase establishes the character of the college and the identity of each facility (...). The buildings of the initial stage form a central academic space, a formal, dignified hub of college activity". N/A, "Scarborough College, Ontario", in The Canadian Architect, May 1964, p. 49.
- 22. Scarborough didn't build its first residence until 1973, nine years after the first students arrived, turning the gigantic brute into a desolated space for long hours during the night.
- 23. One quote from the Toronto *Daily* Star asserted that Scarborough College students, representative of a working-class and uneducated demographic, were doomed to academic mediocracy: "The danger in sending mostly poor students to these colleges is that they are less likely to succeed." (Quoted in *Marooned*, December 1967).
- 24. Arthur J. W. Plumtree, principal of Scarborough, quoted by Friedland (op. cit., p. 452). Paradoxically, "...the conduits buried in the concrete that carried the television cables were perfect for the cables for the computers now widely used in the classrooms and other rooms at Scarborough." *Ibid*, p. 453.
- **25.** 'Scarborough College, Ontario', *op. cit.*, 1966, p. 40.
- 26. TONH, Allan, "'These Movies Work Better If You're Really Stoned': David Cronenberg on Architecture and His Early Work", in *Filmmaker Magazine*, Jan 24, 2014 [online: https://filmmakermagazine.com/84009-cronenberg-on-architecture-and-horror-in-toronto/#.Y5NyBXaZPIU].
- **27.** Stereo was not a precedent to *THX 1138*, though. Lucas's film was itself a remake of his earlier 1967 student short film *THX 1138* 4EB (retitled Electronic Labyrinth THX 1138 4EB for its re-release).
- 28. ACLAND, James, "Scarborough College (University of Toronto)". A Sense of Place, Episode 3 (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Television, aired Thursday

- 18 October 1966). The 30-minute documentary was part of A Sense of Place, a 4-episode miniseries presented and directed by James Acland, professor of Architecture at the University of Toronto. Other buildings featured were Simon Fraser University and Moshe Safdie's *Habitat*. The first minute of the documentary, consisting mostly of exterior, sometimes aerial, views of the building, would work as a perfect introduction to *Stereo*, which opens with the main character arriving by helicopter at the campus.
- 29. Niccol was adamant on using Scarborough, as Scott Alexander, the film's location manager, notes: "The director selected the campus early on. It was one of the focal points for this movie (...) The Meeting Place was the biggest draw. The big space with the balcony above made it perfect for what they were looking for." QUIJANO, Bianca, "Filmmakers find UTSC 'perfect for production'", in *University of Toronto Scarborough*, Sep 9, 2016 [online: https://ose.utsc.utoronto.ca/ose/story.php?id=8745].
- **30.** ALLEN, Nick, "Anon", in *Rogerebert. com,* May 05, 2018 [online: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/anon-2018].
- **31.** Affleck, quoted in *The Canadian Architect*, vol. 11 n°. 5, p. 49.
- **32.** Interestingly, in his review of the film for Slate. Forrest Wickman argued that the film can be seen "as a parable about what it's like to live under a totalitarian state without knowing it," a theme that makes part of the movie's plot in the form of Adam's classes, which deal with dictatorships, and how they have "a main obsession... to control ideas, the knowledge... they limit culture, sensory information... they censor any means of individual expression." WICKMAN, Forrest, "What Should We Make of Enemy's Shocking Ending?", in Slate.com, March 14, 2014 [online: https://slate.com/ culture/2014/03/enemy-movie-endingexplained-the-meaning-of-the-jakegvllenhaal-and-denis-villeneuve-moviespiders-and-all-a-theory.html].
- **33.** See 'Six Concepts' in: TSCHUMI, Bernard, *Architecture and Disjunction*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994, p. 254.
- **34.** "On a preliminary scouting trip to Toronto, we found The University of Toronto

Scarborough and David [Slade, executive producer and director of the early episodes of the show] gave us treated photographs of the buildings with a cool, steely look." PODESTA, Patti, "The Attraction of Opposites", in *Hannibal's Blog*, 7 June, 2013 [online: https://hannibalblog.tumblr.com/post/52331780904/the-attraction-of-opposites].

- **35.** TONDERAI, Mark (dir.), "Vita/Mors". *Impulse*, Season 1, Episode 4. Hypnotic / Universal Cable Productions. Aired on Jun 6, 2018.
- 36. Regarding Brutalism's association with social democracy Jack Self notes that "Brutalism's modular spaces manifested a social desire for... cultural cohesion, shared values, and a fair quality of life for all. The Brutalist citizen, therefore, has to be understood as an abstract egalitarian ideal, not as an individual lost in a microscopic concrete cave of some gargantuan building" (SELF, Jack, "The Morality of Concrete". Clog: Brutalism, edited by Michael Abrahamson, NY: Clog, 2013, p. 29). However, as Timothy M. Rohan explains, when Paul Rudolph was building his Boston Government Service Centre (1962-1971), he had to "vehemently" deny "that the younger generation's charges that the monumentality of the BGSC was fascist." (ROHAN, Timothy M., "The Rise and Fall of Brutalism, Rudolph and the Liberal Consensus," Ibid: 60-61).
- **37.** HENDERSON, Odie, "Fahrenheit 451", in *RogerEbert.com*, May 18, 2018 [online: https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/fahrenheit-451-2018].
- 38. Reasons for shooting the film in colour were purely budgetary: "Searchlight said, 'Well, if you want it in black-and-white, the budget is \$16.5 million," he remembers. "Then I asked them: 'How much if it is in color?' And they said \$19.5 million. And I said, 'Color it is." Guillermo del Toro in: KIT, Borys, "How Guillermo del Toro's 'Black Lagoon' Fantasy Inspired 'Shape of Water'", in *The Hollywood* Reporter, November 3, 2017 [online: https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/general-news/how-guillermo-del-toros-black-lagoon-fantasy-inspired-shape-water-1053206/].
- **39.** POWER, Tom, "Paul Austerberry on shaping the look of The Shape of Water", in *Q with Tom Power,* March

- 4, 2018. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQwGEtXBTFw]
- **40.** "...we used that as the exterior that informed our interior sets, and we built a lot of sets inside that had that language, and again the scenic artists had to match the sort of concrete look for our studio set." lbidem.
- **41.** PUNDIR. Pallavi, "Oscars 2018 Best Picture winner: On the sets of 'The Shape of Water" in *Architectural Digest*, 15 February 2018 [online: https://www.architecturaldigest.in/content/oscars-2018-best-picture-winner-set-design-the-shape-of-water/l.
- 42. "Every genre has its own aesthetic vocabulary, and Hannibal's world is especially rarified. The colour palette is tightly controlled... all our sets are designed from the ground up to meet the needs of character, camera, and narrative." HOLLYWOOD.COM Staff, "'Hannibal' Production Designer Matthew Davies Talks Creating the Terrifying World of a Killer'" in Hollywood.com, February 28, 2014 [online: https://www.hollywood.com/tv/hannibal-production-designer-matthew-davies-interview-57359713].
- 43. Matthew Davies, production designer on the show and London's Bartlett School of Architecture alumnus, states that "(...) If you really watch and study the show closely, you'll notice when we go from a location to a facsimile of that location in studio, there are subtle changes... in the scale or architectural language of the space." GROUCHNIKOV, Kirill, "Production design of "Hannibal" —interview with Matthew Davies", in *Pushing Pixels*, May 13th, 2016 [online: https://www.pushing-pixels.org/2016/05/13/production-design-of-hannibal-interview-with-matthew-davies. html].
- 44. "The influence of Kahn on the early Andrews is perhaps the most evasive of those that played on him... And yet he avers that Kahn was important to him." WALKER, Paul; MOULIS, Antony, "Before Scarborough. John Andrews in the Office of Parkin Associates 1959-1961". SAHANZ 2017 Annual Conference Proceedings, pp. 777-786. For deeper insight on Kahn's influence on Andrews, see: TAYLOR & ANDREWS, op. cit., p.17, and TAYLOR, Jennifer, "John Andrews, architecture", in Architecture

- Australia, vol. 70 n°. 2, May 1981, pp. 30-37. The connections of the BAU facilities with the work of Louis Kahn are perhaps best exemplified when compared with the strict, exposed concrete structural grid of the Yale Center for British Art (1969-74), and the similarly-themed, non-built project for the Jewish Community Center in Trenton (1954-9), whose latest iteration presented a grid of interlocked square spaces crowned by truncated pyramidal roofs.
- **45.** See: NANKIN, Michael (dir.), "One Blood" (*Killjoys*, Season 1, Episode 6, aired Jul 24, 2015), and WOOD, Martin (dir.), "Wild, Wild Westerley" (Killjoys, Season 2, Episode 2, aired 8 Jul. 2016), respectively.
- **46.** SONTAG, Susan, "The Imagination of Disaster", in *Commentary Magazine*, October 1965, pp. 42-8.
- **47.** See GANDY, Joseph Michael, *A Bird's*-eye view of the Bank of England (1930).
- 48. See: The Expanse, Season 2: SALOMON, Mikael (dir.), "The Weeping Somnambulist". Episode 9, aired March 22, 2017; SALOMON, Mikael (dir.), "Cascade". Episode 10, aired March 29, 2017; LIEBERMAN, Robert, "Here There Be Dragons". Episode 11, aired April 05, 2017. The spaces featured are the ubiquitous North Entrance and Humanities Wing façade, and, on the inside, the Humanities Wing's upper balconies, all the way down to the meeting point and the main access.
- 49. See: DE WOFLE [sic], Ivor, Civilia: The End of Suburban Man; A Challenge to Semidetsia, London, The Architectural Press, 1971. For a study on the context and contents of Civilia, see: LUS ARANA, L. M., PARNELL, S., "Learning From Civilia. Critical Heterodoxies, Historiography and Urban Design". Proyecto, Progreso, Arquitectura, 2020, no. 22, pp. 36-53.
- **50.** N/A, "Scarborough College, Ontario". *The Canadian Architect*; May 1, 1966; vol. 11, n°. 5 (1), p. 40.
- **51.** MOSS, Elisabeth (dir.), "The Crossing." *The Handmaid's Tale*. Season 4, Episode 3. Aired on April 27, 2021.
- **52.** FRAMPTON, K., op. cit., p. 187.
- **53.** It is difficult not to draw parallels with collages #83, which turned the Graduate

Centre of Cambridge into a monumental, towering structure, with parts of other buildings at the bottom (Civilia, p. 84), or with collage #82 (Civilia, p. 83), where two images from London's Southbank Centre had been interwoven to make a similar vertical structure. See: LUS ARANA, Luis Miguel; PARNELL, Stephen, "Civilia: Utopia in the Age of Photomechanical Reproduction. Architectural (Photo) copy as (Re)invention", in RA. Revista de Arquitectura, n°. 24, 2022, pp. 154-17.

54. TOSHIYA, Ueno, "Japanimation and Techno-Orientalism: Japan as the Sub-Empire of Signs", in Documentary Box no. 9, 1996, pp. 1-5.

55. NEWMAN, O., op. cit., p. 54.

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Image sources

- Fig. 1. (1) Published in: RAIC Journal, VI. 41, n°. 7, July 1964, pp. 62-63. (2). Published in: SCRIVANO, Paolo and LOBSINGER, Mary Lou: "Experimental Architecture. Progressive Pedagogy: Scarborough College". Architecture and Ideas, vol. 8 n°. 1, 2008, p. 10.
- **Fig. 2.** Composite image from Google Maps (February 2023).
- Fig. 3. Screen captures from CRONENBERG, David: Stereo, David Cronenberg / Film Canada Presentations, 1969.
- Fig. 4. Screen captures from ACLAND, James: "Scarborough College (University of Toronto)", *A Sense of Place*, Episode 3 (CBC TV, 1966).
- Fig. 5. Screen captures from NICCOL, Andrew: Anon. K5 International / Sierra/ Affinity / Road Pictures / Scythia Films, Inc. / Cutting Edge Group / K5 Film / Sky Cinema Original Films, 2018.
- Fig. 6. Screen captures from VILLENEUVE, Denis: Enemy. Pathé / Entertainment One / Telefilm Canada / Corus Entertainment / Televisión Española / Movie Central / The Movie Network / Ontario Media

- Development Corporation / Mecanismo Films / micro_scope / Rhombus Media / Roxbury Pictures, 2013. (2) David Moore Photography: "Scarborough College, University of Toronto, Canada", 1970. Online source: https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/34.2004/
- Fig. 7. Screen captures from DEL TORO, Guillermo: The Shape of Water, Fox Searchlight Pictures / TSG Entertainment / Double Dare You Productions, 2017.
- Fig. 8. (1) DAVIES, Matthew: Concept art for Hannibal TV Series. Online source: https://www.pushing-pixels.org/2016/05/13/production-design-of-hannibal-interview-with-matthew-davies.html]; (2) Screen captures from Hannibal, Dino de Laurentiis Company / Living Dead Guy Productions / AXN Original Productions / Gaumont International Television, 2013-2015.
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