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O.Univ.Prof.Arch.Dipl.-Ing. William Alsop

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Fakultät für Architektur und Raumplanung

Von

Dipl.-Ing. Ines Nizic
Matrikelnummer: 0027724
Burggasse 17, 1070 Wien

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Dedicated to my father, deceased on Christmas 2008

English Summary

In this work, the theme park is analyzed and applied to an architectural context. The central question is in which ways "disneyfication" shapes and influences contemporary architecture. My attention focuses primarily on the narrative, symbolic and cinematic aspects which find application in the architect's repertory as visual and mental tools of the design process. It is worthwhile examining whether "learning from Disneyland" is valid, and in which ways composition and organization as methods of spatial production of a theme park have an impact on the development of architects' planning methodologies.

For this examination of the questions posed in the introduction, first the widely-applied term "theme park" needed to be defined.

As a paradigmatic example for the phenomenon of the theme park, the Disney parks served as the object of my examination in successive sections.

Many architects go against the phenomenon of the themed environment on the grounds of aesthetics, which, as yet, have been dominated by conceptions of the classical modern. According to these conceptions, a supposed high culture contradicts the practice of theming-imbuing architectural aesthetics with symbolic content. Here, the canon of classical modern forms as well as the highly praised functionality based upon it are both ignored. Through this analysis of the theme park and the outlined specifications of the experience-based society, the third chapter shows that the theme park, or rather, the themed environment, is a structural rather than an aesthetic phenomenon.

This work is divided into four sections. The first, "What is a theme park," provides a definition of the subject, as well as the presentation of this phenomenon within an historical context, since theme and amusement parks have, as yet, been related to the twentieth century. The composition of motifs from foreign cultures or historical epochs with elements from festivals, art, culture, tradition, play and shopping will be further addressed. Through this array of functions, theme parks have become independent "cities," whereby, as many worry, they could become the model for city construction of the future. As a paradigmatic example for the phenomenon of the theme park, Disneypark will serve as a case study in several instances.

In the second section, the methods and strategies of the creation of a themed "landscape" will be presented. Disney's utopia, his obsession to not only reproduce reality, but also to improve it, will be elucidated.

Visual coherence, spatial control, fastidious cleanliness, calculable experiences and private management as central characteristics of the theme parks under Disney's direction will be addressed. Consequently the architectural concept and an array of strategies employed in movie theater production will be discussed. Disney's progressive traffic and waste removal system, as well as spatial composition designed by the Imagineers will be presented.

In the third chapter, the context will be described in which spatial production, and with it, architecture, finds itself at the beginning of the 21st century.

In the final chapter, examples will be presented as evidence that Disneyfication has for-

matively influenced urbanity and architecture.

In the first section I will describe the perfect world of the world's first copyrighted city, the constructed inversion of conventional understanding of private and public. Celebration is a contemporary example of reclaimed nostalgia, a postmodern approach to a modern problem that conventional suburbs seem out of reach.

In the second section, the logic in the creation and user reception of entertainment architecture will be discussed as a matter of principle; I will also show how the logic of "themed environments" was adopted in fundamental ways.

N. Klein describes current commercial and experiential spaces as "scripted spaces," as rooms at the heart of which a precisely defined narrative lies. Those which are based upon a script, just as Disney's staged worlds are based upon a screenplay.

Clearly there is a need for places with identity and individuality, whereby it is an advantage to conceptualize an experience-based theme world according to this viewpoint, and to also design architecture according to the aspects of tourism and the media. For this reason, new strategies are sought, whereby the different disciplines of art, film, dramaturgy, theater, and design must cooperate to create the desired atmosphere—one which must also have a partially narrative character. Experience-based theme worlds are consumed, demanded, and thus become products, whereby new standards for engineered environments emerge. Urban space is no longer shaped only by sights of interest, but also by international brands. The more this trend continues, the more architecture will address experience and marketing.

It is essential to speak to the broadest possible audience and create an environment offering many different possibilities. The future task of architects will be to grapple with these aspects and to find new solutions, in order to bring consumption and experience into harmony with the "true" identity of places.

Deutsche Kurzzusammenfassung

In diese Arbeit wird Themenpark als Phänomen analysiert und auf den architektonischen Kontext bezogen. Als zentrale Frage untersucht, auf welche Weise Disneyfizierung zeitgenössische Architektur prägt und beeinflusst. Meine Aufmerksamkeit gilt vor allem den narrativen, symbolischen und filmischen Aspekten, die als visuelles und mentales Werkzeug des Entwurfsprozesses in das Repertoire der Architekten Eingang finden. Es galt zu prüfen, ob sich „Lerning von Disneyland“ lohnt, und auf welche Weise Gestaltung, Organisation als auch Methode der Raumproduktion eines Themenparks für Erweiterung der Planungsmethoden der Architekten von Bedeutung sind.

Für die Auseinandersetzung mit den in der Einleitung formulierten Fragestellungen musste in erstem Schritt der weit gefasste Begriff Themenpark definiert werden.

Als paradigmatisches Beispiel, für das Phänomen Themenpark stehend, diente in weiterer Folge der Disneypark als Untersuchungsobjekt. Themed environment als Phänomen widerstrebt vielen Architekten, auf der Ebene der Ästhetik, die bisher von Vorstellungen der klassischen Moderne dominiert wurde. Ebendieser Vorstellung einer vermeintlichen Hochkultur widerspricht die Praxis des Themings, Architektur-Ästhetik mit symbolischem Inhalt aufzuladen. Hierbei wird sowohl der klassisch moderne Formenkanon, als auch die ihm zugrunde liegende, hoch gelobte Funktionalität übergangen. Durch die Analyse des Themenparks im zweiten, und die skizzierten Anforderungen der Erlebnisgesellschaft im dritten Kapitel ist gezeigt worden, dass der Themenpark, bzw. themed environment kein ästhetisches, sondern ein strukturelles Phänomen ist, und somit wird die reine formale Kritik ungeeignetes Instrument der Bewertung.

Die Arbeit gliedert sich in 4 Abschnitte. Der erste Abschnitt „ Was ist Themenpark“ liefert eine Definition des Gegenstandes sowie die Einordnung des Phänomens in den historischen Kontext, da Themen- und Vergnügungsparks bisher dem 20. Jahrhundert zugeordnet wurden. Im zweiten Abschnitt werden die Methoden und Strategien der Herstellung der thematisierten „Landschaften“ aufgezeigt. Disneys Utopie, seine Obsession die Realität nicht nur zu reproduzieren, sondern auch zu verbessern, wird erläutert. Die Visuelle Kohärenz, räumliche Kontrolle, penible Sauberkeit, kalkulierbare Erlebnisse und privates Management als zentrale Kennzeichen der Themenparks unter Disneys Regie werden thematisiert. Folgend wird auf das architektonische Konzept und eine Reihe von Strategien, die bei der Kinoproduktion zum Einsatz kommen, eingegangen. Das fortschrittliche Verkehrs und Entsorgungssystem Disneylands, wie auch räumliche Kompositionen, von den Imagineers entworfen, werden dargestellt. Im dritten Kapitel wird der Kontext beschrieben, in dem sich Raumproduktion und damit auch Architektur zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhundert befinden. Im letzten Abschnitt wird anhand von Beispielen der Beweis angetreten, dass Disneyfizierung Urbanität und Architektur prägend beeinflusst hat. Im ersten Teil wird die perfekte Welt der ersten Copyright-Stadt der Welt, die gebaute Inversion des üblichen Verständnisses von Privat und Öffentlich, beschrieben. Celebration ist ein zeitgenössisches Beispiel wiedergewonnener Nostalgie, ein postmoderner Lösungsansatz auf ein modernes Problem, das herkömmliche Suburbs nicht in den Griff zu bekommen scheinen.

Im zweiten Teil wird die prinzipielle Logik in der Herstellung und Rezeption seitens des Benutzers der Unterhaltungsarchitektur beschrieben und angezeigt wie die von den „themed

environments“ in wesentlichen Aspekten übernommen wurde. N. Klein beschreibt die gegenwärtigen, kommerziellen Erlebnisräume als „scripted spaces“, als Räume denen eine genau definierte Erzählung zu Grunde liegt. Die, wie auch Disneys inszenierte Welten, auf einem Drehbuch, dem Script basieren.

Offensichtlich besteht ein Bedarf nach Orten mit Identität und Individualität, wodurch es von Vorteil ist, eine Erlebniswelt nach diesen Gesichtspunkten zu konzipieren und die Architektur auch nach touristischen und medialen Aspekten zu entwerfen. Aus diesem Grunde sind neue Strategien gefragt, wo die verschiedenen Disziplinen wie Kunst, Film, Dramaturgie, Theater, Design, kooperieren müssen um die gewünschten Atmosphären zu schaffen, die teilweise erzählenden Charakter haben. Es werden Erlebnisse konsumiert und verlangt, die somit zum Produkt werden, wodurch neue Anforderungen an die gebaute Umwelt entstehen. Der urbane Raum wird nicht mehr nur durch Sehenswürdigkeiten, sondern auch durch internationale Brands geprägt. Je mehr sich dieser Trend fortsetzt, umso mehr wird sich die Architektur dem Erlebnis und der Vermarktung widmen. Es gilt ein möglichst breites Publikum anzusprechen und eine Umgebung zu schaffen, die viele verschiedene Möglichkeiten bietet. Die zukünftige Aufgabe der Architekten wird sein, sich mit diesen Aspekten auseinanderzusetzen und neue Lösungen zu finden, um den Konsum und Erlebnis mit der „wahren“ Identität von Orten in Einklang zu bringen.

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Introduction

While I wrote this work about the influence of theme parks and the phenomenon of Disneyfication on the architectural landscape and our living space, I not only wrote as an objective researcher, but also as an architect and interested citizen.

In the past, my personal perception and estimation of these colorful, vibrant, kitschy and staged artificial worlds could be described as lukewarm at best. However, after I both physically and virtually moved through these urban landscapes and architectural spaces, increasingly characterized by the "philosophy" of "Supersize Me" in both metaphoric and concrete ways, I decided to more closely examine the aforementioned phenomena.

The obligatory literature of every responsible citizen: "The Disneyfication of Cities," Roost, 2000; as well as "No Logo," Klein, 2001, hardly left me "cold." On the contrary, they deeply touched and disturbed me. And at the same time moved me to delve deeper into the "themed environments" and sensory worlds as well as other contemporary implementations of consumer society, and to go on a journey of discovery.

Although I am a critical opponent of the consequences of global capitalism and the aggressive medialization, I cannot presently conceal the concurrent inner conflict between criticism and approval, between rejection and fascination. An affirmation of one side or the other is frequently called for, however. Nevertheless, for me in my work it is less about absolute positions, which in my opinion are impossible anyway, and more about the investigation of mechanisms which are found behind the creation of the new realities of "themed environments."

The purpose of this work is to advance this process of perception and the awake an awareness for the changed modalities of spatial production.

At the turn of the new millenium, motivational research asserted that dreams and desires of the postmodern individual are turning toward objects of lust. The world of abundance and indulgence, the world of events, of experiences and artifice is taking on a new meaning. Theme parks are becoming topical, they demand new products of fantasy which step out of the moulds of classical architecture.

As architects and city planners, we stand at the brink of an important paradigm shift. In the center of design is no longer space, but rather experience which is made possible and the identity which is communicated. The meaning of immediate composition retires in favor of the meaning of the level of communication and the experience.

At the moment, it looks as if the production of space is no longer the task of architects and planners, but much more of a process, one which is fundamentally influenced by economical and social discourse.

Architecture is becoming a synonym for urbanism. Architecture is not just equated with an object. Architecture is environmental and atmospheric, fluent and dynamic, ideal and economical-in part, a space beyond the purely physical.

Modern architecture was not ready for this phenomenon of economic and social change. For architects, entertainment architecture, just as every other aspect of amusement, was a phenomenon that was beneath them. The international style of modernity also devel-

oped under the influence of Bauhaus, founded on the principles of clear form, the cube, the grid, sequencing and function. The classical modern ascribed to architects a moral and pedagogical task, which strove for a new egalitarian reality based on an idealized world view.

Architecture was not permitted to tell stories, and developed an abstract language that was difficult for many observers to read.

Yet, because globalization and medialization have made a linear development of place, time and story, in which space and architecture occur, no longer possible, it becomes even harder for people to spatially and symbolically orient themselves in their environment. In this way conflict arose in architecture, caught between two imperatives: on the one hand to achieve the autonomy of architecture in the sense of an independent cultural construct, and on the other, to break off this autonomous status and to transform itself into an enlarged field of mass culture.

Cultural critics defame "themed environments" as a symbol of the zeitgeist and bad taste, architects bemoan the decline of building culture.

According to V. Scully, modernists hated Disney architecture precisely because of the matter of theme parks.

Conversely, Disney has tried to emphasize the undervalued, narrative, scenographic aspect of architecture, as well as its symbolic dimension.

Disney's architecture explores the cinematographic possibilities of production of spaces, the possibilities of allowing people to step directly into stories.

In this work, I analyze the structural composition of theme parks, both in relation to arrangement and organization as well as spatial production, in order to uncover the possible transfers of direction of architectural and urban space.

The question is then, whether "learning from Disneyland" is worthwhile.

Other than effects of Disneyfication, which may not rejoice in a huge popularity, especially in an urban context under the motto of "City as Theme Park," the narrative, symbolic and filmic aspects which find their way into the repertoire of the architect as visual and mental tools are worthy of my attention here.

I argue that many contemporary architects who can be categorized under the heading of entertainment architecture are "storytellers."

In the age of "the economics of mindfulness," they are capable of speaking many different languages, which they use according to their own will in the universe of "high-brows," "low-brows" and "no-brows."

To me, another concern is tying together the phenomena of the theme park, experimental society and brandscapes as a more sophisticated variety of branding, as well as exposing Disney's pioneering role in the development and implementation of such models.

This work is divided into four sections. The first, "What is a theme park," provides a definition of the subject, as well as the presentation of this phenomenon within an historical context, since theme and amusement parks have, as yet, been related to the twentieth century. The composition of motifs from foreign cultures or historical epochs with elements from festivals, art, culture, tradition, play and shopping will be further addressed.

Through this array of functions, theme parks have become independent "cities," whereby, as many worry, they could become the model for city construction of the future. As a paradigmatic example for the phenomenon of the theme park, Disney park will serve as a case study in several instances.

In the second section, the methods and strategies of the creation of a themed "landscape" will be presented. Disney's utopia, his obsession to not only reproduce reality, but also to improve it, will be elucidated.

Visual coherence, spatial control, fastidious cleanliness, calculable experiences and private management as central characteristics of the theme parks under Disney's direction will be addressed. Consequently the architectural concept and an array of strategies employed in movie theater production will be discussed. Disney's progressive traffic and waste removal system, as well as spatial composition designed by the Imagineers will be presented.

In the third chapter, the context will be described in which spatial production, and with it, architecture, finds itself at the beginning of the 21st century.

In the following paragraphs, the evolutionary history and features of the experiential society will be summarized. This development, beginning with the appearance of postindustrial currents and their causes through to the distinctive culture of experiential consumption, will be considered from the perspectives of several experts. The new visual and narrative culture and corresponding specific methods of perception and techniques of dealing with today's torrent of images will be illuminated.

In the final chapter, examples will be presented as evidence that Disneyfication has formatively influenced urbanity and architecture.

In the first section I will describe the perfect world of the world's first copyrighted city, the constructed inversion of conventional understanding of private and public. Celebration is a contemporary example of reclaimed nostalgia, a postmodern approach to a modern problem that conventional suburbs seem out of reach.

In the second section, the logic in the creation and user reception of entertainment architecture will be discussed as a matter of principle; I will also show how the logic of "themed environments" was adopted in fundamental ways.

N. Klein describes current commercial and experiential spaces as "scripted spaces," as rooms at the heart of which a precisely defined narrative lies. Those which are based upon a script, just as Disney's staged worlds are based upon a screenplay.

We can criticize artificial worlds and "themed environments" as manipulative spaces.

Nevertheless, as an intermediary between cultural and economical interests, architecture may no longer withdraw itself from the spatial and temporal forces of market culture. So architecture and urban forms emerge from the global competition under virtually equal circumstances as consumable goods.

Is the future function of architects and planners to design intensive experiences and to not only plan fixed conditions, but also communicative processes?

1. What is Themepark

1.1 Definition

Theme parks are part of the entertainment programme of a leisure time industry, which is developing into an ever growing multitude and variety of adventure worlds. These adventure worlds include facilities with very different characteristics for which there are no standard overall terms. In the U.S.A. the "amusement park" and "themepark" are distinct categories. The concept "themed environment" implies an abundance of thematic consumption and leisure time venues which range from a shopping mall to an airport. In German speaking countries "artificial amusement world" is an overall term, which includes different, mainly themed based facilities such as Urban Entertainment Centres, leisure parks, Multiplex-cinemas or museums. Leisure and amusement park stands for theme oriented and non-theme oriented facilities, the differentiating lines to theme parks are very blurry.

Although the terms "leisure park", "entertainment park" and "theme park" are often used in technical literature, no standardized definitions exist. The above mentioned terms are often used as synonyms and hence frequently mixed. As there is no great difference between definitions given by experts, the one by J. Kagelmann seems to be the most appropriate one for this paper. ¹

The term „theme park" implies a self-contained, extensive, artificial, static congeries of different attractions, with entertainment and adventure offers, which is usually commercially structured, located outside of big cities / metropolises and open all the year round. Theme parks are mostly run by media or multinational companies traditionally focusing on short trips and excursions, providing offers for the "whole family" and varying their offer depending on sex, age, social class and educational level of the target group. The terms "leisure park" and "adventure park" have become widely accepted in German speaking countries. The major characteristic of these parks is that they are thematically closed units which imply that either the whole amusement park or its individual self-contained units are built around certain themes; characters etc. and are widely recognizable. The theme chosen for the park sets the trend for the architecture and the image of the whole facility.

Giving the park a certain theme means setting up a micro world which positively affects the visitor emotionally through its closeness and in-depth design. The term "theme park" comes from the United States emerging in 1955 when Disneyland was opened in California. The homeland of "theming" has always been the USA. Does the world wide expansion of US cultural products mean the Americanization of the world or does it make "meeting" foreign cultures possible? Tokyo Disneyland is the most visited theme park in the world. Its "foreign villages" cover one third of the whole park.

Generally, theme parks seek to depict motives from foreign cultures or historical epochs. It is less important to create a realistic copy of the original but it is essential to produce a successful scenery arrangement in which everything has to be close and simultaneous, visible and palpable. The main aim is not to match the original but to have an effect on the visitors. This can be ensured largely by the compression of time and space. The ad-

venture park combines elements of celebration, art, education, cultivation of rituals, rides and shopping, both from the information and fantasy world; aesthetic domains, between which the visitors swing back and forth. ² By means of time and space compression, motives from foreign cultures or historical epochs are made available, provoking certain associations and atmosphere through techniques such as repetition and scenery arrangement of materials and symbolic objects. A whole arsenal of cultural symbols und signs emerges through repetition and quotation and synthesize into artificial worlds. ³ In doing so, adventure and profit, culture and economy are strategically combined. Gastronomic enterprises and merchandise shops are important, integral parts and at the same time the Profit-Centers of amusement parks. After paying admission fees the visitors are entitled to use the parks; usually an all inclusive price system is used. ⁴ Due to supplementary recreational offers by hotels and shopping malls the theme parks have become independent "cities", turning into, as many feared, the archetype of future urban planning.

The commercial theme park should hence not be mistaken for static park attractions such as national parks and similar "natural", on one hand there are the designed attractions and on the other the historical didactical theme parks that are to be found in the USA and Australia and which are almost always publicly funded. ⁵ The theme park is also not to be mistaken for amusement parks on fixed locations (Luna Parks) or temporarily set up amusement parks (fun fairs), which are generally only partially theme based, not like holiday parks such as Centre-Parks and water parks.

Sea Life Parks (Marine Parks) are special types of theme parks which offer, above all, circus attractions (dolphins, whales etc.) However, it is not easy to draw the line, only if we think of the dominant characteristics of Disneyland, Walt Disney World, Euro Disney as prototypes of this kind of theme park then it becomes clear.

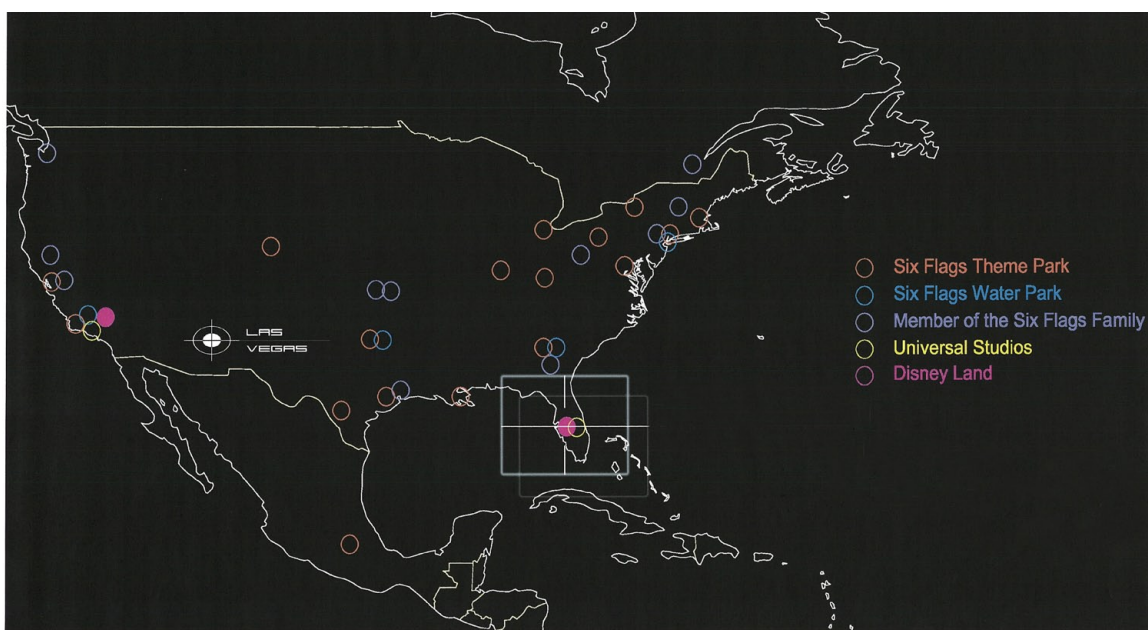


Fig. 1.01 Theme Parks in the United States

It is not a coincidence, that the word "park" is being used, because for the urban society "the World as Park" seems to be a positive state of Utopia. There is hardly any spatial term that is as absolutely and positively appraised as the "park". The city park for example is highly accepted, with an approval rate of 100%,⁶ better than any other urban functional space. Whereas a garden represents a part of the wilderness, anticipating nature, a park is an area which is placed outside the overruling working atmosphere and as opposed to a garden is "socialized" i.e. can/should be publicly used which makes social interchange possible.⁷ At the same time it would be interesting to examine if we are dealing with a new myth, in the form of an imaginary park, which cannot exist in reality. After all, advertising and the economy have utilized all these positive images. At the moment we are witnessing a unique "park-boom": industrial parks, high-tech parks, energy parks, waste disposal parks or technology parks are being set up everywhere. Artificial worlds of recreation and commerce in the shape of narrative space production have become the characteristic of a global mass culture and turned out to be topography of the adventure society.

1.2 Historical Background

The simulation strategies of the entertainments industry are a product of "late capitalism" or are an original product of the consumer society or adventure society, according to numerous critics. According to an historical analysis these statements have been proven wrong. Forbearers of today's theme parks existed in Europe long ago. The description of the Golden House of Nero, the Roman Emperor, reminds us of modern amusement and theme parks. The Golden House was above all a green house. The centre of the spacious facility, which the Emperor Nero had built after the big fire, over the ruins of the centre of the town between the Palatine, Esquiline and Caelian hills, was actually a lake, today's Colosseum. The lake was surrounded by copies of coastal cities and different estates with animals. The visitors were surprised by elaborate effects. The Roman author Suetonius describes a round dining room which was spinning day and night like the Earth, while rose petals were dropped or perfume was sprayed on the assembled diners by mechanisms in the ceiling. ⁸ The concept and the decoration of Nero's park followed an iconographical programme, with the aim to confirm and glorify Nero's reign. Although nowadays theme parks are built for commercial reasons, are open to a broad public and pursue objectives other than those of a despotic sovereign, similar artificial landscapes are still used as a background for entertainment programs. ⁹ Different worlds, some more exotic than others, which could not exist next to each other in this way in reality, are built on a defined landscape. (Well preserved remains of the Hadrian Villa in Tivoli near Rome show us what these copies could have looked like. The Emperor had copies built of numerous buildings which he had seen while travelling.) ¹⁰

The history of amusement parks is closely connected with the history of industrialization and the development of cities. Due to ever smaller living spaces in the cities and increasing job related stress the need was becoming stronger to have spaces where people could meet and enjoy themselves.



Fig. 1.02 Prater Vienna, historical Picture

Today's theme parks originate from medieval quadrangles, fairgrounds and courtyards.; folk or hunting festivals which were outside of the city walls and were not only gathering and market places but places for amusement. The population enjoyed themselves watching puppet theatre, play houses, jugglers, and conjurer and animal tamers. Even the Jesuit religious policy during the Counter Reformation focussed on pomp and persuasion, using art and architecture to produce sublimeness and humbleness through sensual and emotional arrangements with believers.¹¹ "The advocates of enlightenment" used, similar to the Jesuits, the stimulating and proven effects of pictorial staging to spread their ideas. Affected by English sensationalism they were the opinion that humans perceived the world through the senses i.e. feelings. Another route originates from the baronial gardens and parks. During the absolutism period, "pleasure gardens" such as Versailles were built in France and copied in Germany and Austria. In these feudal facilities forerunners can be found for design features of modern amusement and theme parks. Even at that time exotic buildings and plants were used for amusement, as well as grottos, hermitages, chinoiserie and historically designed buildings and ruins.¹²

These gardens as "the triumph of man over nature" represented the absolutistic world model and always glorified the power and wisdom of the prince. Their role was to show the earthly image of paradise, likewise Louis XIV was the earthly image of God. In the beginning the population had limited access to the gardens. Only the botanical gardens which were built in the 16th century were open to the public, provided they had free time.

Prater

In 1776 Joseph II declared the Prater in Vienna to be free for public enjoyment making it the first emperor's park to be opened to the public. The Prater is the oldest and still functioning amusement park in German speaking countries and was established on a fenced off forest area for court hunting, as a recreation facility for the Viennese population. At the beginning of the 19th century the Prater was the type of amusement park we find in England and France also offering: pubs, coffee houses and sales booths, amusement such as Punch and Judy shows and carousels. New entertainment concepts were applied after the World Exhibition in 1873. The general technological development had a great impact on the Prater too. In 1838 the Northern Railway was opened bringing the first railway carousel (Calafati) into the Prater in 1844. The introduction of electricity brought the first European track into the Prater (Pilz).

The first cinema was opened in the Prater in 1896 as the first "moving pictures", cinematography came into being. To mark the popularity of the aeroplane the first "Aeroplankarussel" (plane carousel) was built to be followed by the first "Autodrom" (Grand Autodrome) in 1926 and the first "Geisterbahn" (ghost train) in 1933. "Liliputbahn" a functioning miniature steam train, that still runs today, was introduced to the Prater in 1928. In 1935 a Prater-businessman from Chicago brought the "Flugbahn", a fast moving system, to the Prater, which was not fixed on rails. At the beginning of the 20th century electricity made it possible to set up lighted shows and spectacular fantasy landscapes. Prater became very popular. On sunny summer days up to 15,000 visitors came to the amusement park; around 1/5 of Vienna's total population.¹³

The first private sector owned, commercially run amusement parks opened in England as early as 17th century. Starting in London and then spreading into other English cities among them larger coastal towns. A new type of amusement parks came into existence: the "pleasure gardens".¹⁴ This kind of amusement facility consisted of a large park area with inns, vivariums, water games, music-, theatre- and dancing halls. To some extent they represented the civic-urban counterpart to the court parks and gardens. The park was used by a strolling bourgeois society on a Sunday as a green backdrop to show off its prosperity. The park was a sign of a public citizenship which separated hard working life from private life.

Tivoli

The "Tivoli Gardens" replaced the "pleasure gardens" during the 19th century. With the "Vauxhall Tivoli Gardens" in London, which influenced all these kind of gardens a least by name, a new kind of special amusement park was introduced. The "Tivoli-Garden" in Copenhagen which opened in 1843 still exists and is probably the most famous and the most visited "Tivoli" leisure park.¹⁵

Considering the great competition by similar establishments the commercial amusement parks were soon forced to offer further attractions and secure their existence. The forerunner of modern Ferris Wheel, the "Russian swing" was introduced in the mid 18th century offering a modest thrill. Not the staging of another reality was dominant any more, but the offering of different attractions and sensations for which the visitors had to pay in order to enjoy. Against this background the shows and rides became more important. A major gain for the Grand Tivoli in 1804 was when a slide was built, the forerunner of a modern roller coaster. The idea of "Tivoli" was shortly after exported to New Orleans (USA) and Japan and has remained almost unchanged up to the present day.



Fig. 1.03 Prater Vienna, Ferris Wheel 1899

Venice in Vienna

Likewise, an important step towards our contemporary amusement and theme parks was made at the end of the 19th century in Vienna. A businessman Gabor Steiner opened Venice in Vienna in 1895, a copy of famous parts of the doge ruled city, directly next to the Prater. That which Las Vegas offers today as a new attraction, had been already offered in Vienna at that time: "Venice in Vienna" was a centre of the entertainment in Vienna for decades.

Taking a gondola ride the visitors encountered another world. "Venice in Vienna", which can definitively be compared to the modern theme parks, was visited by more than two million guests within the first year and frequently remodeled and equipped with new attractions. As all the Venetian themed buildings were taken down in 1901, because the visitors got bored with them after five years, the canals disappeared too. The area was again called "English Garden" and a new park came into existence: "International City" with copies of buildings from all around the world. The staged urban scenery had already been dominated by Egyptian, Japanese and Spanish street scenes. After the destruction, in the Second World War, almost nothing remained from the spacious park except for the Ferris Wheel which was built in 1897.¹⁶

The English "pleasure parks" are the forerunner of the American "amusement parks", which were built in almost every large town in the USA and Canada in the closing years of the 19th century.

The era of leisure and amusement parks on the American continent began at the turn of the 20th century on several fronts. One of the crucial ideas emerged out of a dilemma. Young local tramway operators had to pay lump sum fees to their power supplying companies. In order to get the necessary number of passengers so that the electricity costs could be covered, they opened restaurants, dance halls and smaller rides at the tram's final destinations. These facilities proved very profitable, so that they spread very fast around the whole country and very often turned into amusement parks in the course of time. The Chicago World's Fair inspired, in 1893, a few businessmen to copy and commer-



Fig. 1.04 Venice in Vienna

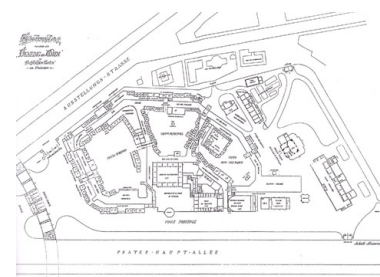


Fig. 1.05 Map of Venice in Vienna

cially market an amusement park (our Midway) which was set up for the first time with over 40, partly novel, attractions for the duration of the exhibition.

Paul Boynton, one of these businessmen, founded "Boynton's Water Chutes" ¹⁷ shortly after the World's Fair in the south of Chicago, a water slide the idea of which can be back tracked to the World's Fair.

In 1895, after the great success of the Chicago project, a bigger "Sea Lion Park" was built on New York peninsula, Coney Island. This is seen as the first modern amusement park because a new concept was applied, which is one of the main characteristics of theme parks, even today. A site was fenced in and an entrance fee was demanded which covered many available rides. A booming branch of trade was born due to which 1,500 amusement parks were built until 1919.

Coney Island – Mass Culture Symbol / Delirious amusement park

At the end of the 19th century amusement parks, some of enormous sizes were built on the outskirts of European metropolises and in the USA. Illusory and dream worlds were designed and built by designers and architects who used cutting edge technology: the more spectacular the better. The biggest amusement area at the time was on Coney Island in the south western part of Long Island in New York. Coney Island had been used mainly by rich New Yorkers for swimming and excursions since 1830. In the 70s and 80s of the 19th century more and more amusement facilities, hotels and restaurants were built which ruined the image of this coastal area. In order to improve the image but also for economic reasons the area was redesigned in 1895 and three separate amusement parks were built: Steeplechase Park (1897), Luna Park (1903) and Dreamland (1904), adding an educational touch to the philosophy of the amusement park by using copies of historical buildings such as ruins of Pompeii.



Fig. 1.06 English Garden

However, the “cultivated” standards were too high for revellers who craved sun. The Irish dramatist Brendan Behan described Coney Island in 1964 as “a terrific, fabulous and an extremely proletarian institution, [...] where thousands upon thousands of ordinary folk get out on the subway [...] and thoroughly enjoy themselves.”¹⁸

A flight simulation over Manhattan anticipated first flight, a volcanic eruption and an earthquake were also simulated. Electric light was used in a way that a day was extended and the illusory and dream world was even more enhanced. The big attraction was “Electric Bathing” (bathing at night under electric light). In Dreamland which was the name for Dream World Park about one million light bulbs were used. Visitors could enjoy themselves in the Ballroom, Liliputia, Fall of Pompeii, Ride in a Submarine, End of the World, Flight over Manhattan, Canal of Venice etc. “Venice” was one part of the whole facility in Coney Island too. Numerous towers were built in order to give a good overview of the whole area. The invention of the lift was almost a logical consequence and was celebrated as a big sensation. To crown the whole achievement the “Globe Tower” was planned a project which could have been implemented only by using previous structural developments and inventions. The ball-shaped building should have had a roof garden, restaurants, theatre etc. An underground station was planned directly underneath the ball. The project was never completed and shortly after the whole amusement park was destroyed by fire.

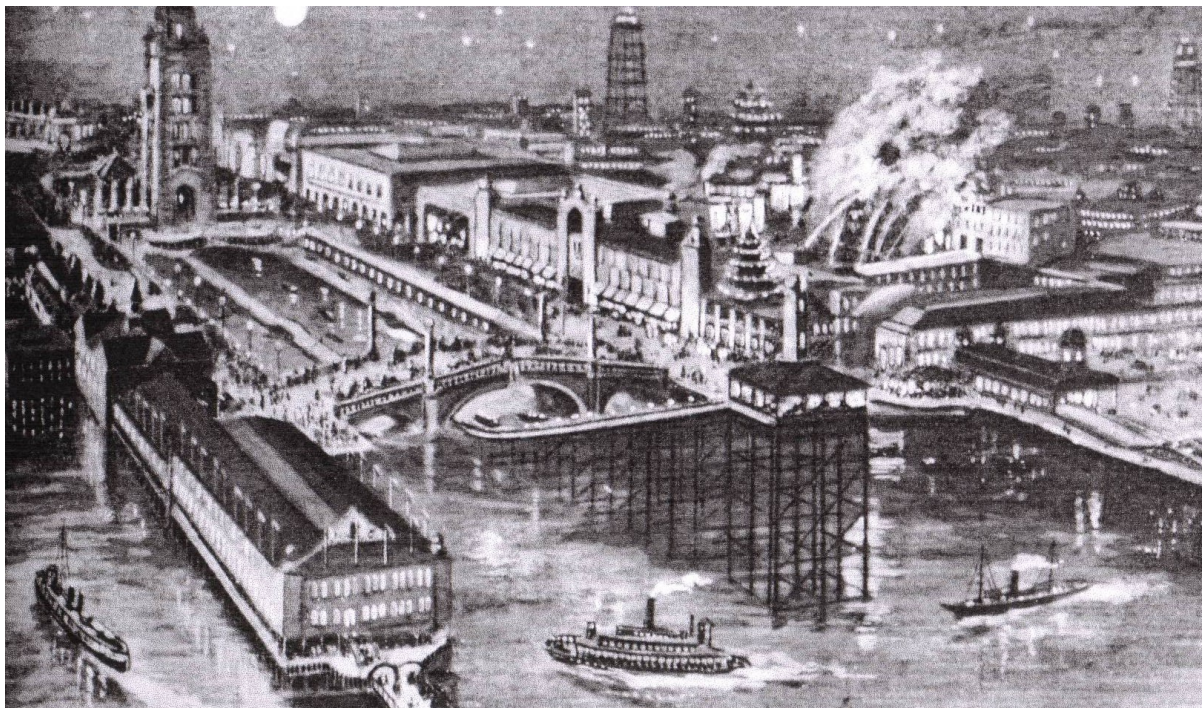


Fig. 1.07 Coney Island historic Sketch

Rem Koolhaas uses Manhattan as an example in the second part of his book, "Delirious New York",¹⁹ to describe the impacts of these dream worlds on the development of a metropolis in the 20th century. Coney Island was a playground for architects. They could make urban dreams "real" in Manhattan. The possibilities offered by the lookouts in Coney Island, were the model for the design of skyscrapers. The designers and architects took the ideas for their buildings from the theme and illusion worlds of the amusement parks. In 1931 "Downtown Athletic Club" a fitness temple was built, a skyscraper, which was used exclusively for physical training. The idea of a "Globe Tower" came into mind consistently and spectacular theatre houses were built ("Radio City Music Hall" or "Cut-away of Tylon and Pherisphere"): a combination of different attractions and facilities as we know them today in Multiplex centers. In 1978, as the book, "Delirious New York", was published, Koolhaas²⁰ traced an urban development which seems to be repeated later. A combination of cinema, theatre and shopping malls is being built worldwide, based on the same principle as the "Coney Island Amusement Centre". Numerous modern theme parks and ball shaped projects and Urban Entertainment Centers which are being built almost 100 years later prove the importance of such a development.

Coney Island's prosperity phase was from 1895 until the First World War with 200,000 to 1 million visitors per day on peak days.

Coney's new urbanism of fantastic technology was applied all around the USA, even in the places where the urban density was not even approximately reached. Steeplechase, Luna Park and Dreamland were copied true to the original.

Coney Island remained the world's centre of the amusement park industry for many decades and inspired similar building projects worldwide.



Fig. 1.08 Coney Island - Luna Park at night

The Great Depression and increasing motorization stopped the expansion of the American leisure markets in the 1930s. People did not depend on trams any longer and amusement facilities close to the cities and easily accessible became unattractive.

The first golden era of American amusement parks came to an end due to shrinking economy and the fading financial strength of the population in 1929; in 1935 only approximately 400 parks remained. After the end of the Second World War a short revival followed, which was however again choked to death in the early 1950s due to changed leisure time behavior resulting in a drop of visitors. The newly created TV amusement offer was, among others, a reason for the change of interest in conventional leisure parks.

The American "amusement parks" had in turn a big influence on further development of the amusement parks in Europe. The "Luna Parks" in Paris, Rome and Berlin corresponded to the model of the American parks. "Fixed fairs" were built in almost every European city mainly emerging from fixed fair booths. Luna Parks were, however, relatively short lived among other things due to the First World War; and these types of parks disappeared again very quickly from Europe. The Vienna Prater is among the few still existing Luna Parks in Europe. Only few privately owned amusement parks survived the First World War and the Great Depression. The German amusement parks came to their final "End" during the Third Reich. The character of the amusement parks was inconsistent with the ideology of the National Socialists.

Disneyland – "The theme park"

Disneyland, the archetype of theme parks, was opened in California in 1955 and has ever since been the synonym for a broader ever developing spectrum of amusement parks, which includes not only fantasy parks but also water parks, film parks and brand parks. Artificial amusement worlds become individual, real destinations through the fusion of different attraction points and offers (theme park, hotel, gastronomy, shopping malls etc.) While the former amusement parks were built in urban areas or on their outskirts, the opening of the first Walt Disney amusement park in Anaheim, California meant the era of the suburban "theme parks". Disneyland differed from the previous amusement parks also because the rides and attractions for which visitors had to pay were not offered on the smallest possible area, but became a part of a spacious theme park area. Disney created several thematic areas which can be combined, but are closed off and if possible not visible through other units. ²¹

Disney used his experience with film scenery and movie settings. Disney set up five different theme worlds: Adventureland, Lilliputian Land, Fantasyland, Frontier Land and Holiday Land arranging them around an idealized small town road from the 19th century the so called "Main Street, U.S.A." ²² He translated, with that, the ideal of the American middle class into a spatial creation. Disney's other amusement parks in Orlando, Florida; Japan and Paris diversify and only slightly modernize the original motives. Walt Disney World in Florida which was opened in 1970, and is the biggest theme park in the world, brought another innovation, creating a "holiday resort". ²³

"... the Disney theme park form is the most popular attraction on earth" ²⁴

The fantastic success of Disneyland attracted great number of imitators in the 1960s and 1970s, some of whom added new highlights and strived another image, targeting ,for example, teenagers ("Knotts Berry Farm"). This new variety was not only successful because of the innovative concept but also because; compared to other countries the U.S.A. fulfilled earlier the socio-economic criteria needed for the growth of a leisure time, cultural way of life. Theme parks benefited from the strength of the individual level of motorization and increasing free time of a population who are able to freely dispose of a greater income. Only ten years after theme parks started booming in the U.S.A. the same development could be seen in Europe. As a result this new park idea was spreading in the whole North America, Europe, Asia and Australia setting new benchmarks for theme parks. In the U.S.A. the limits of the saturation of the market were almost reached at the end of 1980s.

It can be said, that theme parks in the U.S.A. and Europe had started becoming more and more similar in 1980s at the latest, in spite of an extremely different history. The major reason is that keeping to certain general criteria when planning leisure and amusement parks makes success almost programmable. Along with the precisely chosen location in urban areas with a large catchments area, also good accessibility by car, plane and train is an important precondition. Other criteria are; the size ranging between 30 and 80 hectare, an above-average favourable climate at the planning location, as well as using well-known brands or names, mainly from the amusement industry as a lead. The high living and leisure time standards, which both continents have almost simultaneously enjoyed, and an absent leisure time culture after the Second World War, were further reasons for a growing assimilation. The standard distortion ²⁵ is a worldwide significant characteristic of leisure and amusement parks. Hardly any project is built according to scale, be it Venice gondola canals, the "Cinderella Castle" in Disneyland, European "city parts" in Europapark Rust, the Caribbean in the Centre Parks, or the oversized Newport Bay Hotel by Robert A. M. Stern in Disneyland Paris. The critics think that the secret of success of the leisure time industry lies not in a fulfilling, meaningful recreational activity, but in the visitors' escape from an often dull daily reality.

1.3 Disney parks – Greetings from Mickey Mouse

Chronology

Disneyland is a name for amusement parks which are designed on the stories, ideas and principles of Walt Disney. It differed from everything known before with respect to its enormous dimensions and arrangement of the attractions. The term theme park was used for the first time, because the visitors were given the possibility to choose between five different "dream worlds" which consisted of numerous attractions and rides.

The 75 hectare large, Disneyland, was opened in 1954 introducing a revolutionary change in the leisure time sector. The historic accomplishment of Walt Disney was, among others, in combining the foregoing movements: "development of specific sections of amusement parks and entertainment" and "multiple deployments of successful motives and characters". The popularity of his film and comic products and the general acceptance of their merchandising products were transformed into an intense design of a thematically closed amusement park, which in turn also re-affected the original Disney products with its own attractions and offers.

The term Disney is similarly associated worldwide and stands for Mickey Mouse, cartoons, cinema, family friendly entertainment, concisely; it is the embodiment of the "American amusement industry". The Disney affiliated group is nowadays already beyond being a cartoon producer, and is one of the most influential media groups in the world. ²⁶

This success story began in 1923 when Walt Disney Film Company was founded in Los Angeles by the brothers Walt und Roy Disney. Characters, themes and fantastic adventures were developed and technical possibilities of animation were examined. Walt Disney travelled around the world, was interested in technical progress and tried to use these possibilities directly for his company.

He critically observed amusement parks in the whole world for years and, apart from Tivoli in Copenhagen, could not take any positive pleasure in any of them. Aside from the lack of cleanliness and unfriendly personnel, he criticized above all the boring sequence of attractions and set ups without concept. Furthermore he found it depressing that in



Fig. 1.09 Photograph of Walt Disney in front of Sketches for Disneyland



Fig. 1.10 Sitemap of Disneyland Anaheim

traditional amusement parks adults were forced only to watch children because they were hardly given any chance to amuse themselves. He also knew that the traditional; already 60 year old amusement concept of Coney Island was not in accordance with the spirit of the time. Based on this criticism and his considerations how such facilities could function, he developed his own concept of a park with carefully chosen themes.

Anaheim

Very early on Walt Disney had an idea to build on about an 8 hectare large park near the Burbank Studios in California. This place would offer relaxation and recreation to the employees of the Studios (also to Disney himself) and their families. During the Second World War his intentions were put on hold. Already during the planning phase after the Second World War it was obvious that a larger area, than plot near Disney Studios in Burbank originally foreseen for Disneyland, would be needed. After research by the scientists at Stanford University it was decided to take the location of orange groves and walnut trees in Anaheim, California. A new motorway exit to Los Angeles assured good accessibility of the park and on 21. June 1954 they started building.

In order to obtain funding, Disney invented in the 1950s, in cooperation with the ABC television network (the American Broadcasting Company), a TV show called Disneyland which had its premiere on American television in October 1954 only a few weeks before the park was opened. The visionary Walt Disney wanted to present his park to future visitors with this TV series. Every week a new attraction, and the next part of Disneyland, was introduced. ABC was granted the rights over Mickey Mouse; and Disney started building. This show turned Walt Disney into a popular TV host nationwide. The broadcasting company is also a part of the Disney media group today.



Fig. 1.11 Map of California



Fig. 1.12 Statue of Walt Disney with Mickey Mouse in Disneyland

In 1952 Disney founded WED Enterprise (Walter Elias Disney Enterprise) in order to bring Disneyland to life. The first drawings addressed one of the main themes in park – the Main Street, U.S.A. and were developed by Harper Goff. First designs were made within a single weekend. Concept adaptations brought however extreme changes: Lilliputian Land was cancelled for fear of actions for discrimination, Jungle Ride had to get by on mechanical instead of living animals and all “walk through” attractions were changed into “rides” due to unforeseen risks.

Walt Disney himself proved very consistent during the planning phase. Well meaning experts could not argue him out of building only one entrance, or out of splitting the park into individual areas, which however would be accessible through a central unit (Fantasyland with the Sleeping Beauty Castle, where Walt Disney had his own apartment from time to time). According to planning experts the project Disneyland was clearly doomed to failure.

In the year of the grand opening it became increasingly clear that it would be impossible to meet the deadline. Strikers (due to missing wages), inspectors who had no idea about amusement parks (and because of that wanted to close almost all the “rides”) and the constantly rising costs were the major setback for Disney’s visions. However, he was determined to continue building and to meet the deadline for as many attractions as possible.

On 17 July 1955, exactly 361 days after start of work, the time had come, and Disneyland in Anaheim, California was opened. The opening of Disneyland should have been strictly observed and only employees and their families, chosen journalists and important investors should have been allowed on the premises. However, 30,000 people rushed the park and overcrowded it on the opening day. The result of this invasion was a disaster, many attractions refused services or broke down, the food stands and restaurants ran out of food and beverages and Fantasyland had to be closed due to a gas leak. As Walt Disney found out about this relatively late, he called it “black Sunday”. He was on a big TV show which was being shot specifically for the opening on chosen places in park.

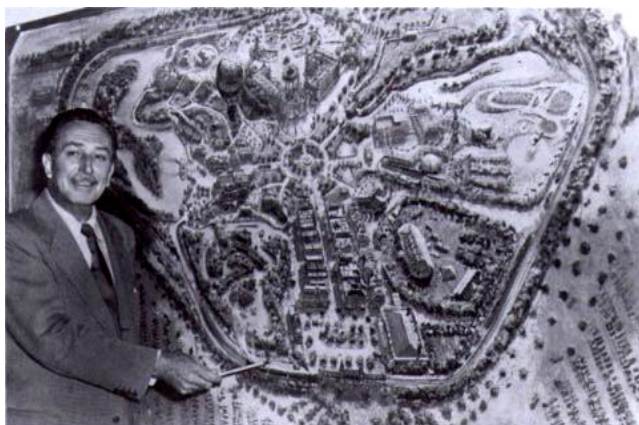


Fig. 1.13 Walt Disney with Site Map of Disneyland



Fig. 1.14 Advertisement Map of Disneyland

In spite of initial difficulties Disneyland quickly became popular among Americans. Within the first seven weeks one million visitors came to California. In the years to follow Walt Disney finished Tomorrowland which was made available in a smaller size for the opening due to lack of money. Many other park attractions followed.

Today's form of Disneyland is in the broadest sense very close to the 1950s original idea. Nevertheless, numerous attractions were added, others in return removed or modified. Disneyland has been repeatedly extended since its opening. New Orleans Square, in 1966, was one of the latest changes Disney witnessed. "Pirates of the Caribbean" was an attraction which was turned into a movie in 2003 with the same title. A second big enlargement was Critter Country in 1972, first named "Bear Country". In 1993 Mickey's Toontown eventually answered the question to where Disney's comic characters live. Among numerous hotels and restaurants which were added throughout the years another whole park was built in 2001 - Disney's California Adventure - as an extension of the existing complex. Together with the newly built Downtown Disney accompanied by hotels, restaurants and shops, a new resort was built similar to Disney World Resort in Florida.

In the technology and security the park is state- of -the- art and is even now very popular. Not all visitors can access extremely fast rides and attractions. A defined minimum body height is required which prevents accidents and ensures that every passenger is properly secured. On a 350,000 m² location in total, 12,000 employees take care of several millions visitors, proving too often that "those who are late will be punished by life itself" which for "the Happiest Place on Earth" ²⁷ means endless waiting lines.

Disneyland, also called Disney's Magic Kingdom, is divided into five areas; Adventureland, Frontierland, Fantasyland and Discoveryland ²⁸ are arranged around Main Street, U.S.A. Visitors will find everything they already know from the Movies of the Disney movie industry there. Cartoon characters are friendly disguised Disneyland employees and paying visitors become interactive protagonists in different movie adventures.



1.15 Disneyland Sketch

Rides offer additional thrills and participation scary rides is well controlled. Selling different memorabilia provides extra revenue for the park operators. A distorted scale became Disneyland's trademark as well as in all of leisure and amusement parks of this type built later. The copies of buildings and streets are extremely small; the real comic characters seem disproportionate.

Main Street, U.S.A. is a copy of an American small town around 1900 and is a connection between the main entrance and "Fantasyland" with the Sleeping Beauty Castle (actual centre of Disneyland). Cast iron balconies, windowsills overloaded with flowers and old-fashioned street lanterns are regarded by some visitors as a journey into the past, by others as a movie stage. Main Street, U.S.A. is like a visiting card of Disneyland; several million visitors pass through it yearly. The visitors are provided with a lot of information (maps of the premises, information about daily parades and shows and possibly other attractions which are out of order or are being maintained) there are restaurants and shops, as well as Disney Road a steam train, which drives around Disneyland in 18 minutes ,stopping in several "lands".

In Adventureland, set not far from a well kept lawn and small cafés at Central Plaza, exotic smells, magnificent plants and a jungle with spears and masques of unknown forest dwellers can be found. The Indiana Jones Adventure is located here and visitors go into a temple and then on a speedy round trip in a troop-transporter through dark caves and past glowing pillars of fire. Jungle Cruise ²⁹ is one of the oldest attractions and actually a simple boat trip – admittedly through waters full of crocodiles...

The adjoining New Orleans Square ³⁰ offers the hottest Jazz sounds and the best Southern cuisine. The narrow alleys are lined with small handcraft stores and street cafés. The Haunted Mansion ³¹, with 999 ghosts and breathtaking special effects and the Pirates of the Caribbean, where a horde of wild pirates auction women and loot towns, are the main attraction of this "district".

Critter Country lies in a back wood setting on northwest part of Disneyland. The ride in Splash Mountain ³² seems to begin peacefully and simply, until the climax where the passengers speed down a 47 degrees drop in a tree trunk and end up in a pool, the ones in the first rows get very wet.



Fig. 1.16 Horse Carriage at Mainstreet, Disneyland



Fig. 1.17 Main Street, Disneyland

In Frontierland ³³, a gold miner town of the 19th century we can admire cacti as big as in old Wild West movies, real mud brick houses, a Mississippi steam boat and shops where handicrafts of the Native Americans are sold.

In Big Thunder Mountain Railroad ³⁴ visitors enjoy a pleasant ride in a mine train over pits and tunnels, only to rush down over them without breaks.

Old Disney villains such as Captain Hook or evil stepmothers meet their rivals in Fantasmic!

Mickey's Toontown shines, mainly for the young visitors of Disneyland, in pale pink and baby blue and stands for the homeland of all Disney characters. In Mickey's House one can peek into the living room of the popular mouse, or visit Donald Duck who lives next-door.

Fantasyland ³⁵ lies in the centre of Disneyland with its Sleeping Beauty Castle it can be seen on millions of souvenir photos taken at the gates of Disneyland. Rides in this land are direct copies of the famous feature length Disney Cartoons: be it a flight in Dumbo, the elephant with enormous ears, a ride in a tea cup from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, or a flight with Peter Pan to Neverland, the most sentimental, harmless fellows can be found here.



Fig. 1.18 Advertisement for Adventureland, Disneyland

In 1955 Tomorrowland ³⁶ offered even more breathtaking ideas such as an electrically operated toothbrush in House of Future, however by the 1970s Tomorrowland became a "Yesterdayland" and a general overhaul was required. The new attractions could not be shown to the public until 1998. Since then, as it was in the years that followed its opening, Tomorrowland could win the visitors over again. Within its borders the courageous ones can test their hearts and stomachs being catapulted into outer space, but also be shrunk to a size of a mouse in the first Disney-3D-adventure "Honey, I shrunk the audience!" ³⁷ "As long as fantasy exists in this world, Disneyland will never be finished", Walt Disney predicted at the opening of Disneyland in 1955 in Anaheim. Almost 50 years later an enormous growth spurt took place, which cost the Disney Company several million US dollars. In Disney's California Adventure, a new theme park, visitors can become actors, or paint cartoons with their own hands. Additionally there is the Disney Village with shopping malls, restaurants and shops and the Grand Californian Hotel, offering 750 beds, the only one of three Disney Hotels which is situated directly on the parking compound.



Fig. 1.19 Disneyland, Parade

Walt Disney World Orlando, Florida

In spite of his financial situation, which was not exactly prosperous due to over expenditure, Walt Disney was thinking about building another amusement park as early as 1961, which was not opened until 1971 five years after his death.

Ocala und Orlando in Florida were possible sites. Due to plans for a new freeway and the better connection possibilities to the transport network that went with it, the choice finally fell on Florida two years later. It was also decided to buy the needed land under a false name because if Walt Disney's name had been mentioned the prices would have soared. In 1965 Disney finally bought 122 km² of land from the state of Florida (that is equivalent to twice the size of Manhattan). Because of a newspaper article with the title "We say it's Disney [...who buys the land]", what they had been afraid of actually happened and WED Enterprises had to pay, instead of the normal price of US\$180 per m², 1.000 US\$! Project coordination for the new Disney World was again in the hands of WED Enterprises. The plans were to be as much like the existing Disneyland as possible but more modern and a lot larger. In 1966 Walt Disney died and left his brother Roy with the task of finishing Disney World.

On 1st October 1971, 16 years after the opening of Disneyland, Disney World was opened by Roy Disney in Orlando, Florida, as the second entertainment park of the Disney Company, and named Walt Disney World in memory of his brother. Only two months later Roy Disney also died and the Disney Company has been carried on by long term employees and colleagues of the brothers.



Fig. 1.20 Walt Disney in front of Florida Map

EPCOT – Mickey Mouse as masterplaner

Walt Disney had yet another revolutionary idea during the development phase of Disney World. Walt Disney World “should have, according to his volition, not only attractions from Disneyland, but furthermore EPCOT³⁸ (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow) should be included, an experimental, but functioning town with 20,000 permanent residents, in which the technology of technoids, future life forms, could be tried out. A sort of Polygon, where Disney could test his ideas for town planning. “What we’re talking about is an experimental prototype community of tomorrow. What does that spell? E-P-C-O-T. That’s what we’ll call it: EPCOT!”

Disney wanted to go a step further with this project. When he was alive he was very interested in the social development of the future and wanted, in this way, to have a creative influence on them. His goal was no longer just the entertainment industry; he wanted to expand this park by adding a town, which provided living space for his employees and that should take a look into future technology. EPCOT was supposed to unify everything: autonomy (separate tax specifications, administrative law), absolute corporate control, state -of -the- art environment, realization of visions for the future.

Like Disney World, EPCOT was to be a town without worries or fears, a place without crime, without disease or dirt. Disney dreamed of a controlled society, an example for American industry and research, under an enormous glass dome. Utopia, in his opinion. Monorails which glide almost soundlessly on tracks, vacuum pumps that suck up rubbish, the latest communications and monitoring systems, a sensor ,that gives plants exactly the right amount of water they need. Everything to make an American’s life easier and more beautiful.

EPCOT was in this form, however, never realized. Shortly after Walt Disney’s death in 1966, the experimental beginnings ceased to be pursued. Epcot was opened in 1982 as a theme land in Disneyland Orlando, Florida .It is, however, just a sort of permanent World exhibition, in which each country is presented in a very stereotyped way and in which the American conglomerates can present their ideas and products. The term Epcot was finally used as a trade name for another theme park, where the sponsors of conglomerates like General Motors or Exxon could distribute their visions for the future of mankind.

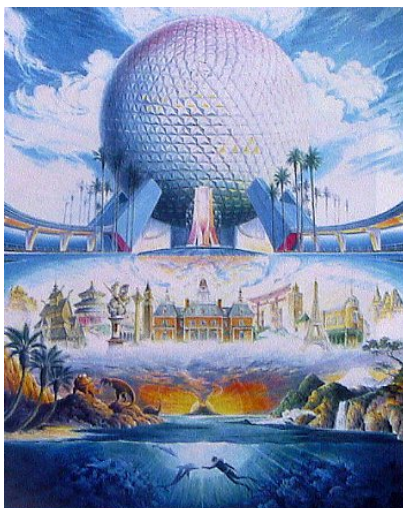


Fig. 1.21 EPCOT Sketches



Fig. 1.22 EPCOT Sketches

Frequently the five letters are used for the slogan „Every person comes out tired” to give an indication that there is, apparently, an unending supply of information and entertainment to experience in “Epcot”.

In the opening year, 1982, many of the pavilions, along with their contents, that the large firms sponsored or built in the futurology and communication park, were indeed absolutely futuristic. Visitors could for example, surf on the internet as early as the 1980s! However, rapid development in the technology sector in the last ten years forced Disney to constantly upgrade to keep up with the times. The result is a fascinating theme park, half technology in Future World, and half world exhibition and ethnology in World Showcase. Attractions such as Spaceship Earth ³⁹ are well known, a geosphere, that is, a king size golf ball, in which 40,000 years of the history of the Earth and mankind is told in an interactive fifteen-minute-show; or the Universe of Energy, in which the history of energy and its recovery is told from the time of the dinosaurs to the present day. Wonders of Life is dedicated to the theme of health and in Test Track visitors are invited by the sponsor General Motors to drive a test track in a six-seat car, not only over hill and dale but also over a cliff.

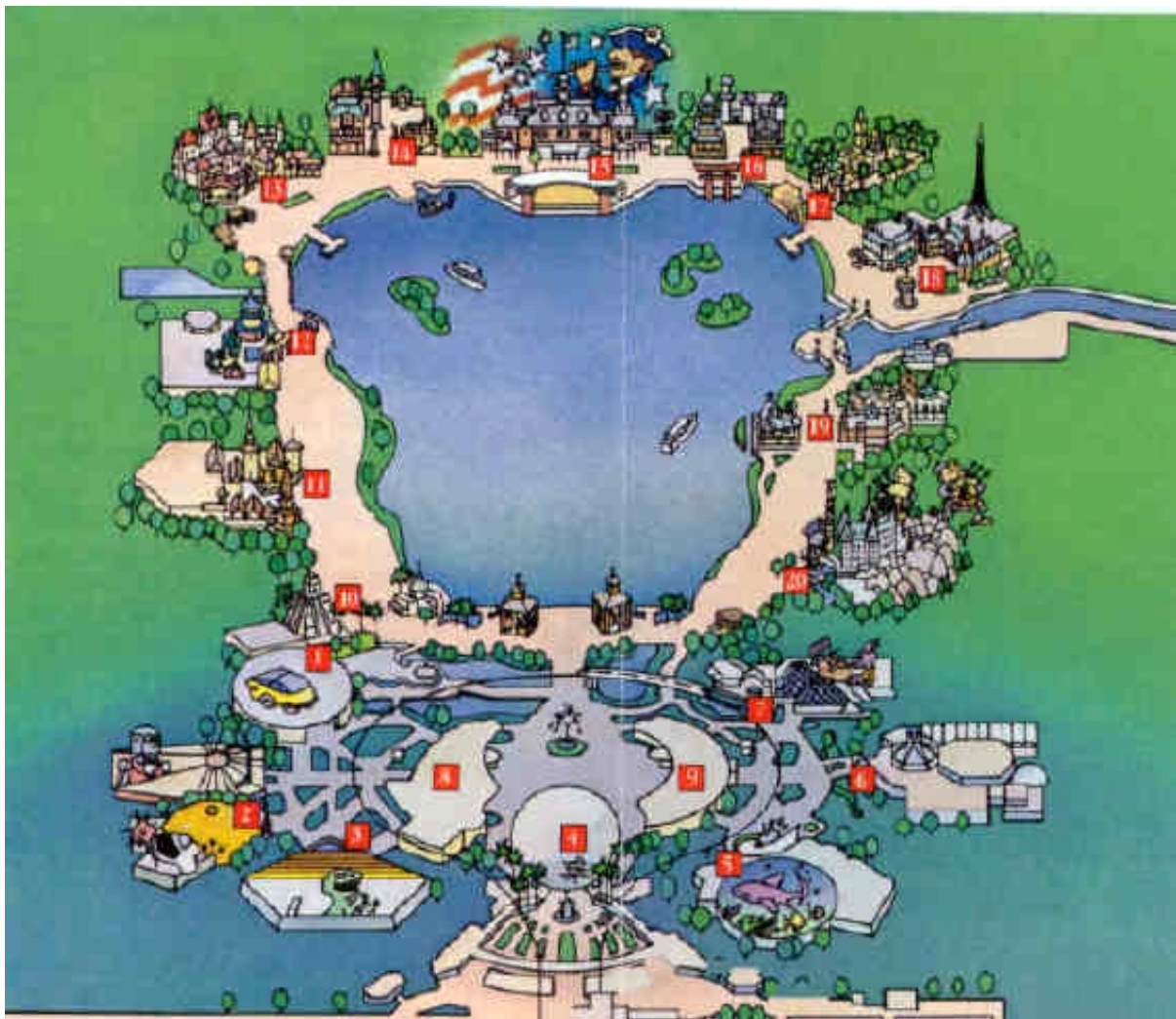


Fig. 1.23 EPCOT Site Map

In the World Showcase ⁴⁰, a small world exhibition, representatives from some parts of the world can be found. The Cast Members come in most cases from the countries represented and ensure a markedly authentic ambience. Not all countries have got rides or attractions, but all of them offer a multitude of culinary delights and crafts from each area, sometimes without the “black ears” as decoration. Mexico, Norway, China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Morocco, France, Great Britain, Canada and, of course, America can be found side by side.

Disney World has been expanded constantly over time with high financial input, on the one hand to meet the requirements and the expectations of the visitors and on the other to incite earlier guests to repeat their visit. Several completely new theme parks have emerged in Disney’s empire, among others Disney’s MGM Studios, a copy of a film set suitable for visitors, with numerous breathtaking rides.



Fig. 1.24 EPCOT, Rendering and Photo

In the last decade the operating company has gone to great effort to help Walt Disney World (WDW) reach a higher intellectual standard. To this end, internationally well known architects were commissioned among others: Frank Gehry, Arata Isozaki, Michael Graves, Robert Stern and Aldo Rossi. Whether this was a success is disputable, at least in some areas like hotel architecture.

After all, with 50,000 employees, Walt Disney World Resort unifies today, 4 theme parks (the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney's MGM Studio and Animal Kingdom), 3 water parks (Blizzard Beach, Typhoon Lagoon and River Country, that has been closed) the entertainment and shopping complex Downtown Disney, Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex ⁴¹, 17 resort hotels und 6 golf courses, on 111 km². The normal tourist can spend weeks in WDW and never become bored. The WDW Resort is currently the largest entertainment park in the world with 12,000 hectares of land, however in future it will rank just second after "Dubailand", which is currently being built.

Enjoy

The Disney MGM-Studios are a collection of attractions from the Metro Goldwyn Meyer Studios, one of the biggest and oldest film companies in Hollywood. The park is not divided into countries or areas but only includes Studios-Land and was opened in 1989, one year before its rival the Universal Studios Florida and inspired by their success in California. Highlights are The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror with the mad elevator in the Hollywood Hotel, in which the passengers are first hurtled 13 stories up and then immediately afterwards 8 down, the Backlot Tour, which shows a (harmless) look behind the scenes of a film production, from a costume workshop, to sound technology and special effects, everything is professionally explained and without nerve wracking "rides", or the "Rock'n'Roller Coaster" ⁴², a stretch limousine, that apparently involuntarily mutates into a roller-coaster and whooshes along busily, looping at 100 km/h.

Disney's Animal Kingdom ⁴³ is not just a safari park full of animals, but a manmade natural landscape with 1,000 living animals (from 200 species) and an indefinable number of animatronics, i.e. mechanical, artificial animals. The vegetation is real, if not it is aesthetically made of plastic and can be held apart from mother nature only with great difficulty. Even the smells are not to be trusted: is that a lion out of a can or is the King of the jungle actually lying there behind the next tree. Generally, it is pointed out to visitors that they should not be disappointed if they do not see a lot of animals around because in Florida's hot sun most of them prefer the shade or the caves especially at midday or in the early afternoons.

The Magic Kingdom is the oldest Disney Park in Florida and the symbol for Disney entertainment and equals in the broadest sense the premises of Disneyland in California. Main Street, U.S.A. is also in Florida and is a reproduction of an American town around 1900. It forms a connection between the main entrance and the centre of the Magic Kingdom, and the Sleeping Beauty Castle in Fantasyland. The Victorian houses are regularly repainted in pastel colours and are not quite life size but built to a scale of 4:5. The visitors are impressed every evening when the sky is lit up by a firework display, a pyrotechnical masterpiece Fantasy in the Sky.

Adventureland has the same attractions as in Disneyland in California: Pirates of the Caribbean, the Swiss Family Tree, in which the marooned Swiss family Robinson shows how nice life can be on a desert island and the Tiki Room, with 225 mechanical birds, which were developed by Walt Disney himself and were his first "animatronics".

Frontierland lures, also in Florida, with Splash Mountain and the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad. Tom Sawyer ⁴⁴ is one of the few attractions in Walt Disney World that was designed by Walt Disney himself.

As on New Orleans Square in California, you can see here on Liberty Square a simulation of the period of promoterism of the United States of America. The Hall of the Presidents shows an overview of all American presidents and there is also the Haunted Mansion with breathtaking special effects.

Mickey's Toontown Fair is the home of Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy, Pluto and many more Disney characters, who live mainly in country houses. This is surely the most beautiful part of Walt Disney World for children.



Fig. 1.25 Walt Disney World Map

Classical Disney film characters can also be found in Fantasyland. In carousels the visitors can sit in Dumbo the elephant, Cinderella's golden coach or a king size tea cup. In Legend of the Lion King the story is told live and the story of the "The Sword in the Stone" lets the visitor try to pull the legendary sword "Excalibur" out of the stone.

The future can be met today in Florida in Tomorrowland, in Space Mountain in a flight through the galaxies, in a dark room with a greedy alien from the Extra Terrestrial Alien Encounter, or as in California in Astro Orbiter, in which the visitor can command his own space ship. Authentic design was valued in Tomorrowland for example in the means of transport of the Transit Authority. In the Walt Disney Carousel of Progress a time journey through the development of technology is reproduced similar to the reproduction of the American constitution in Liberty square in the Hall of Presidents. ⁴⁵

The water parks, which can also be found in the Disney World Resort, ensure thrills for young and old at different intensity. In the Typhoon Lagoon, the biggest artificial wave pool in the world, a small village is presented that has been devastated by a typhoon. The Blizzard Beach is also a reproduction of a freak of nature. This time it was a tornado that left a snow covered mountain in Florida. On the melting floods brave bathers can, first be taken up a height and then, plunged into the depths on a 110 meter long ski slope. River Country ⁴⁶ is the oldest and also the gentlest of the three Disney water parks and offers with irregular rock formations an ambience like that of the wild west.



Fig. 1.26 Main Street with Christmas decoration

Downtown Disney was originally called Disney Village, but soon became bigger than a village and therefore renamed. In Downtown Disney there are numerous restaurants and cafes ready to be discovered. Guests can shop, wonder, dance, celebrate and of course enjoy almost round the clock. The centre is divided into three large areas (the Marketplace, Pleasure Island and West Side ⁴⁷, which are joined together by footbridges, paths, roads and a ferry on the water.

Walt Disney World has influenced the commercial development of the Orlando region considerably because of large numbers of visitors. Today, the Disney estate is surrounded by three freeways to ensure the necessary infrastructure to deal with the masses. Along the freeways dozens of smaller leisure parks have settled which try to complement Disneyworld's range of offers. The city of Orlando has agreed to remodel the centre of the city to a sort of western town with all of the flair of the turn of the century in the hope that it will attract more tourists. Today the whole region of Orlando is totally dependant on leisure park tourism and nearly all jobs are directly or indirectly dependant on the success of the surrounding parks. ⁴⁸ In 1983, a year after the opening of the "Epcot" in Disney World in Florida, Japan opened the doors of the third Disney entertainment park near Tokyo. In 1994 the last park, for the time being, was finished: Euro Disney the Disneyland Paris.



Fig. 1.27 Walt Disney World, Animal Kingdom

Disneyland Tokyo

Theme parks in Japan are a child of the so called bubble economy, which brought with it a leisure boom in the 1980s. At this time countless parks in the form of Dutch towns and Spanish villages and German or Bavarian farms appeared in detailed copies of their European counterparts. Up till the beginning of the 1990s analysts thought of East Asia as the leader of international theme park market.

Based on the success of the Disney parks the company began to export its theme park idea, originally strictly geared to "typically American" values, cultural norms, needs and motivation. In 1983 Tokyo Disneyland was opened, the most successful export of the American entertainment park industry up to the present day, and with it began a new era of the leisure industry in Japan.

Tokyo Disneyland was developed and run by the Japanese Oriental Land Company, a jointly owned subsidiary company of a real estate company and a railway company. The original master plan came from Disney as well as consultancy during the erection phase and in operational management. In return Disney receives ten percent of the admission fees for 45 years and five percent of all profits from restaurants and shops. Business decisions are made by the Oriental Land Company and it also carries building and operational costs. Tokyo Disneyland is bigger than Disneyland California (30 hectare) with 49 hectare and Disney World (43 hectare) in Florida.



Fig. 1.28 Disneyland Tokyo, People building a Queue

"I wanted to visit Disneyland" Kim Jong Nam, son of the North Korean ruler Kim Jong II, said in his defense in spring to the Japanese immigration office, after his unsuccessful attempt to enter Japan. Nothing can describe the appeal of Tokyo Disneyland, the most visited theme park in the world, better than this anecdote.

At first sight Tokyo Disneyland is a copy of its American counterpart. The spacial organization of the parks is dominated by five autonomous "worlds" with Cinderella Castle as an eye catcher in the center. Cast members, employees dressed up as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, pose in front of the visitors' cameras as in Anaheim and Orlando. The attempts of the Walt Disney Company to expand the attractions to be more like native orientated traditions e.g. "Samurai Land" were strictly rejected by the Japanese.⁴⁹ The decision to stay purely American seems to strengthen the belief that it all has to do with the export of a cultural form. Only when we look closely do we see that almost everything in the park, from its name to the kinds of attractions, even to the public policy have been subjected to a context change. In other words the foreign aspect keeps its exotic character and is at the same time adapted to Japanese consumer habits. "America" as well as "Japan" are generated as stage effects in Tokyo Disneyland. On the basis of local conditions, more or less subtle changes were made. Main Street, a reproduction of the main street in Walt Disney's birth place at the turn of the century, which constitutes the entrance area in Anaheim and Orlando, was made into the World Bazaar in Tokyo, Frontierland was renamed Westerland. Main Street, the nostalgic reincarnation of small town America was turned into the shopping mall, "Japan" on-stage. In contrast to the parks in Anaheim and Orlando, Tokyo has got a considerably larger assortment of relatively expensive goods, coordinated to the Japanese souvenir tradition.

Modifications were also made to the attractions. In Cinderella Castle there is a tour that is only offered in Tokyo Disneyland. This Mystery Tour is different from all the other Disney rides in sequence and the accompanying ceremony.

Cinderella Castle as the optical and spacial center of this tour underlines the central meaning of the self presentation of Japan "on-stage".⁵⁰ This example shows the importance of consumption in the domestication of Disneyland.



Fig.1.29 Disneyland Tokyo Map

Disneyland Paris

The first serious plans for a European theme park were expressed in 1976. 1,200 possible sites stood for discussion, as the considerations for the implementation of Euro Disneyland began in 1984. A lot of factors played a part in the search for the appropriate location: Holiday habits of the Europeans, ground conditions, infrastructure, climate, available land, local economy, employment market existing tourist attractions. After a great deal of consideration and comparing of the different offers, advantages and possible disadvantages only four serious candidates came into question: Barcelona and Alicante in Spain, Paris and Toulon in France.

Spain seemed enticing, the weather could be compared with California; the Catalan government seemed very cooperative and every year millions of tourists came or travelled through the region to take holidays on Spanish beaches. However, that was the first problem as Spain is a seasonal holiday destination; it seemed very unlikely that Disney would attract enough visitors out of season to be able to operate the Magic Kingdom the whole year round. Spain was simply too far away from the heart of Europe to attract more than 6 million visitors per annum. The site near Paris, however, promised 11 million visitors if not 18 million per annum. The infrastructure in Spain was also lacking a motorway network and rail track connection compatible to the rest of Europe. Michael Eisners enthusiasm was not increased by a letter he received from ETA, the Basque terrorist organization that said that Disneyland would be a target for terrorist attack.

Disney was originally very interested in a piece of land near Toulon in Southern France. The beautiful landscape and southern climate made it one of the main candidates for Euro Disneyland, but thick rock layers were found underground that would have made construction work difficult.



Fig. 1.30 Sceme of Disneyland, Paris

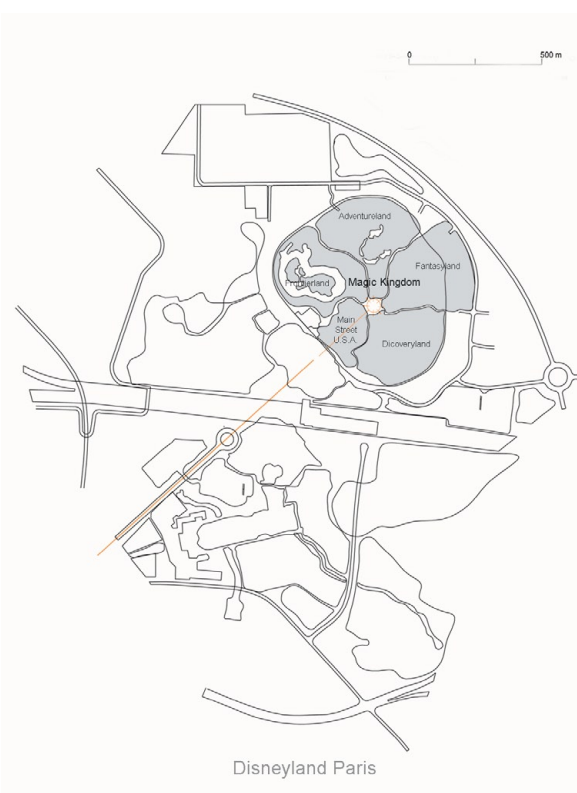


Fig. 1.31 Sceme of Disneyland, Paris

The other location for the European Magic Kingdom was in Marne-la -Vallée, one of the satellite towns around Paris. This site seemed to be in the middle of nowhere surrounded by nothing but farmland. However the A4, the most important motorway in France, ran through Marne-la -Vallée and the whole construction site was only 30 minutes from the centre of Paris. Estimates determined that more than 70 million people could reach Euro Disney in less than 3 hours by car. From 1993 the Euro tunnel between Great Britain and France would shorten the distance from Paris-London to two and a half hours. Paris seemed perfect, exactly in the middle of Europe. The park could be connected to the center of Paris by the Métro, the entrances to Euro Disney should not be more than six minute from the next Métro station and the journey there should take no longer than 40 minutes. As it turned out the French government were also very interested in having a new Disney park thousands of jobs were created, not to mention the blessing to the French economy of millions of tourists. On the one hand Disney tried to keep the financial risk to the company to a minimum, but at the same time make as much profit as possible from the park without letting control of management out of its hands. The decision fell finally on the Paris location. The head of the theme park department from Disney entered into negotiations with the French government. In the middle of December the French agreed to sell approx. 18km² of land in Marne-la -Vallée, well under the current market price. Disney made known that they would not only be building a theme park in Marne-la -Vallée but also a holiday resort with 5,000 hotel rooms, a camping site, an entertainment district with clubs, restaurants and shops, a golf course, conference rooms, offices, apartments and of course a Magic Kingdom theme park. They also made public that Euro Disney would not only be run by the Disney Company but also that they were looking for European in-



Fig. 1.32 Size of Disneyworld Orlando compared to Disneyland Paris

vestors. It was Disney's intention to have the new resort pay royalties for Disney figures as they had already done in Tokyo.

Political support for Euro Disney was enormous. From more than seven billion US dollars Disney would only have to pay 350 million US\$, the French even offered a loan for 700 million US\$ with a very low interest rate as well as a reduction in VAT from 18.5% down to 7%. Last but not least they agreed to build a TGV rail station directly next to the Disneyland park and to expand the A4 and Métro Lines to connect the centre of Paris to the Disney resort. On 12th April 1992, 32 km east of Paris on the edge of the satellite town Marne-la-Vallée, Disneyland Paris was opened. Europe's first entertainment park, run by the Disney Company

The largest park in Europe lies on the 1,943-hectare site of the Euro Disney Resorts ⁵¹, on which in future a superlative leisure and holiday complex shall be built. The complex is about the size of a fifth of Paris, up to the now only a fraction of this area has been used. The theme park Magic Kingdom, with five theme areas and 40 attractions in total, stretches over an area of 57 hectares. The Disney estate is shaped like a polygon with irregular contours.

Thanks to an excellent system of motorways, railways and international airport the complex is easily reached from all western European countries in a few hours. A feeder road constitutes the centre line of the complex and ends in the Magic Kingdom at the other end of the premises. The park and its attractions, as well as the hotel complex which belongs to it, are designed radially and are surrounded by railways and ring roads.



Fig. 1.33 Disneyland Paris, Functions

Disney Village

Besides the large theme park, which is the only leisure park in Europe that is open all year round, there are 7 theme hotels with a total capacity of 5,800 rooms, a ranch with rustic log cabins to rent, a camping site and the Festival Entertainment Centre, a 18,000m² game and amusement centre with diverse sport, fitness and leisure facilities (tennis courts, a golf course with 18 holes, fitness club and swimming pools). In Euro Disney Resort there are 7 hotels, each designed to a different theme, they present an attraction in themselves, whether a region of the U.S.A. or a period of American history. With a capacity of over 5,000 rooms the hotel area stretches over 58 hectares. The hotels lie south east of the theme park on the banks of Lake Disney or on the Rio Grande. The reason why Disney decided to build so many rooms was the experiences it had made in Anaheim and Orlando. In both towns Disney did not control a large part of the hotel rooms. Most visitors slept in hotels outside the Disney resorts. In Disneyland Paris, the large numbers of Disney hotels were designed to scare off other hotel businesses so that Disney would get the lion share this time.

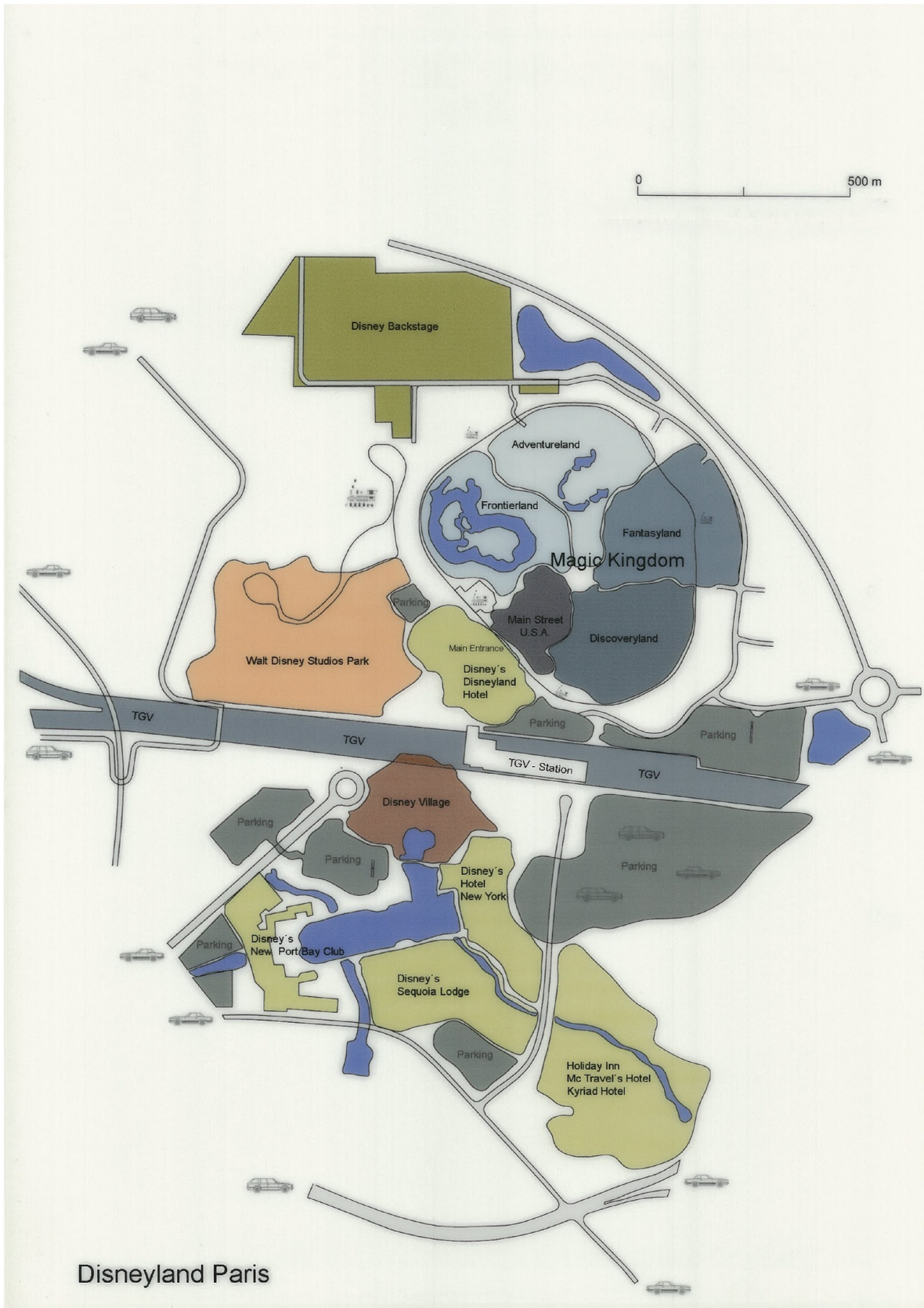
The Disney Village is an enormous entertainment centre (the largest of its kind in Europe), that includes a theme park and hotel complexes. The entrance can be seen on the park side in large highly visible lettering which is illuminated at night. An amusement mile stretches from here. Spanned over the whole complex is a net with little lamps hanging on wires which are held in the air by metal shafts that line the roads. This project was designed by the architect Frank Gehry and the Frenchmen Saubot and Julien.

Directly next to the Disneyland Park, a brand new theme park has been built called Walt Disney Studios. Opened on 16th March 2002, this new park, which is only a few meters from the Disneyland Hotel and Disney village, takes the visitors to the golden days of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s and offers a look behind the scenes of films, TV shows and, in particular, how cartoons are made.

The last construction step of the Euro-Disney Resort will be finished in 2017 and includes among others

a facility for an extensive European film and television studio, 13,000 new hotel rooms, an enormous conference centre, a water park, another golf course and camping site, as well as offices, apartment buildings and other facilities that are important to the company.

Euro Disney had secured the rights to develop the majority of the land and to build new offices and apartments. This was to be a safety net for Euro Disney; in case the resort did not prosper as expected this, the largest real estate business in the history of Europe, would guarantee the survival of the company



Disneyland Paris

Fig. 1.34 Disneyland Paris, Scheme

Cultural differences

As in the other Walt Disney Company theme parks the visitors are transported in Disneyland Paris into a three dimensional fantasy world in past times and the far places. The Magic Kingdom is made of five theme areas Main Street, U.S.A., Frontierland, Adventureland, Fantasyland and Discoveryland.⁵²

As the Disney Company wanted to build a typical American Park, planning was orientated on the successful American counterparts and exact copies were rebuilt of proven favorites from Florida. However, the park was different in some ways from its American counterparts.

The most noticeable difference is that excessive leaning on the real mediaeval towns, cathedrals and castles in Europe was avoided. Where the castle in Disneyland was modeled on Neuschwanstein and that in Disney World on the castle in the Loire valley, the model for the Sleeping Beauty castle in Europe was Mont Saint-Michel. The centuries old monastery with the surrounding mediaeval village, winding stairs and turrets was the perfect picture of a fairy tale castle. The artist Frank Armitage created concept drawings according to this model.

The building materials used for the construction of Main Street were also different from those in Anaheim and Orlando. They did not want to use fiberglass like they had done in other Disney parks. They did not want their simulation of America and its lifestyle to appear empty and cheap. So they decided to use real materials like wood and stone (which then were also used in the rest of the park). Arcades that run right and left, parallel to the streets are a new element. On the one hand these arcades would provide extra moving space if the Main Street was too full and on the other they would provide shelter from the frequent showers in France. Disney knew that they had to offer the European guests enough shelter space and the arcades seemed to be a perfect solution. Several attractions are especially designed for Europe and deliberately play on how the Europeans imagine America, as presented in old films and cowboy stories.

In spite of all efforts Euro-Disney did not record the same success as the two American Disney parks. Disneyland Paris first showed black figures in 1995 but these profits cannot be compared to the American parks. The question must be asked if the Europeans would rather take their holiday in real tourist destinations. An important reason is thought to be the language; lots of people are afraid of language problems and would rather visit an entertainment park in their own country.

If we look at the dimensions of the planned Disney Resort, the question arises what objectives the American company actually has. Many critics are asking themselves if the Disney Corporation are all about creating a theme park which offers a new style of leisure and entertainment or are the parks a pretext for extensive exploitation and building development⁵³ of the whole territory.

Disney Today

The central contemporary character and key figure of the successful Walt Disney company is Michael Eisner, who took over its direction in the mid-1980s. Eisner relied on the synergy effects that arise between the individual corporate segments to achieve something next to impossible. Compared to Disney's total revenue outside of the United States in 1983 of around \$140 million, the same figure reached \$4.6 billion in 1997. The beginning of this overseas growth was the creation in 1983 of Tokyo Disney Land, the concept for which differed in many ways from the successful American strategies employed in Orlando and Anaheim. Due to the cold, damp weather in the region around Tokyo, Main Street U.S.A. was covered with a roof, so that despite bad weather conditions, customers could continue to shop.

On September 12th 2005, Disneyland Hong Kong was opened. Because Euro Disney in Paris was not experiencing great financial success due to cultural differences between the US and Europe, Disney deliberately avoided recreating this mistake and tried instead to appeal to the Asian taste. Restaurants serve Asian cuisine, Mickey has a new red and gold suit, and Mulan, whose story was based on a Chinese legend, has her own Pavillion in Fantasyland Garden which resembles a Chinese temple. For the construction of the theme park, a Feng Shui master was consulted, who even placed the main entrance in accordance to the rules of Feng Shui. The size of the park is exactly 888 square meters. The number eight, which represents life, is the luckiest number for the Chinese. Four, on the other hand, is the unluckiest number. For this reason, Disney Hotels have no fourth floor.⁵⁴

Nevertheless, even this Disneyland looks confusingly similar to the original in California. Disney is confident that despite the resemblance, Disneyland Hong Kong will be a success, since the Chinese recognize the other Disneylands from the media, and because Western culture is such a fascination.



Fig. 1.35 Disneyland Hong Kong, chinese Mickey Mouse

The Chinese market is relatively new for Disney, and because of bureaucracy and copyright infringement, profits are not as high as they could be. However, due to its population density and improving quality of life, China offers an interesting and promising market. For years Beijing has also been in talks with Disney regarding a possible new theme park in Shanghai. According to Liu Zhengyi, the administration in Shanghai has already reached agreements with Disney on the most important terms. Now the project needs the approval of the Chinese government. This new Disneyland is planned to be built in the Pudong district in the center of Shanghai, a district which has become more important to the city in recent years. The park will cover an area eight times larger than the Disneyland in Hong Kong. Although a timetable has not yet been fixed, builders hope to open the park in 2014.

While twenty years ago Disney's overseas identity was built on comic books and cartoons, in the intervening years the concept of "cross promotion" has been carried over to other countries.⁵⁵ Today, one of the corporation's ventures promotes the other and vice-versa. Films act as advertisement for Disneyland Paris and the Times Square Project; at the same time, Disney products are sold in shops, films are promoted, and the ABC program "Good Morning America"⁵⁶ is produced on Times Square.

Along with theme parks, the corporation owns several book publishing companies, newspapers, dailies, film production companies, theatre rental agencies, cable television stations, music production and recording studios, stage shows, real estate agencies, US major league ice hockey and baseball teams, video producers and distributors, stores, licensing agencies, software developers and online services. Since the takeover of the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) for \$19 billion in 1995, Disney has been in a neck and neck race for the position of the world's largest media group, only a hair's breadth behind Time-Warner.



Fig. 1.36 abc - image



Fig. 1.37 Disney DVDs Advertisement

Today Disney is much more than simply one of the world's leading media corporations. With the establishment of the city of Celebration, not only did the corporation realize the dream of founder Walt Disney that had failed to become a reality in the 1960s, but it also stepped into the real estate investment business. Michael Eisner speaks of architecture as "entertainment architecture,"⁵⁷ referring to structures from his era such as hotels by Michael Graves and Robert Stern, or the entertainment center by Frank Gehry. According to Eisner, thematization is a synonym for design and architecture. In this way, a use of architecture emerges that portrays as desirable the stylization of civil engineering as theatrical staging. This stylization corresponds with the economical calculus of figuring architectural-rhetorical effects, not only to allow for flexibility in the utilization of the structure, but also to use the performance requirements as deciding marketing factors. Critics such as Roost argue that the theme park model developed by Disney has broken out of its original framework, and serves now as a colporteur of social relations. Shopping streets, chain restaurants like McDonald's, and Nike's and Reebok's logo-mania are all influenced by Disney's replacement of civil rights with the concept of international "Shopertainment."

At the same time, the term "disneyfication" appeared in our language, used as a synonym for the tendency to turn our world of flesh and blood into a Disneyland imitation-germ-free, safe, enjoyable and predictable.

The basis for the success of the city planning policies in the eyes of the residents and guests of this "artificial paradise"⁵⁸ lies in the family-friendly image of the corporation and its decades-tested marketing strategy.



Fig. 1.38 Brands

2. Anatomy of Disneyparks

2.1 What does Disney stand for? Walt Disney Park Philosophy

A laconic answer would be: Disney stands for entertainment.

There are many possible associations with the name Disney: the copyrighted lettering, the Mickey Mouse logo, or extraordinarily successful films like "Aladdin" or "The Lion King." Primarily, however, the company founded by the visionary young artist named Walt Disney on a minimal budget in 1923 is a giant of today's international entertainment industry.

Entertainment is a special business for the Disney enterprise. Its offerings range from cartoon figures to theme parks, from Mickey Mouse to Disneyland. Fantasy productions define the product line of the Disney corporation.

Already in its early phase of company growth the firm showed so-called "cross-promotion" marketing strategies ¹, strategies which are persistently pursued today: one product promotes another. A television station does an advertisement for the park; in the park guests are solicited by the ABC broadcast "Mickey Mouse Club." This strategy enables the corporation cumulative marketing synergy effects, promoting brand loyalty in their customers so that a company's different products serve as advertisements for each other. In this way complimentary promotional products are developed by various subsidiaries-for example, a feature film marketed with an accompanying book and soundtrack, both of which promote a television series introducing comic characters that can be visited at a theme park. This cross promotion, called a chain, can be extended indefinitely.

Disney has relied upon this advertising method for decades. The success of the media corporation is based upon founder Walt Disney's recognition of the possibilities presented by cross promotion, a marketing technique which he further developed. His rise from a simple cartoon producer to an important entrepreneur of the entertainment industry was mostly due to a concept of simultaneous development of the theme park and conception of the television series which could promote it. Disney contracted ABC to broadcast his most valuable marketing products-Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and the other cartoon characters-in "The Mickey Mouse Club," a show which he moderated himself. In this way, "Uncle Walt" grew to become a national symbol of family-friendliness and simultaneously promoted his amusement park in Anaheim. ²

Disneyland and the "Mickey Mouse Club" show were born twins. The park was the first place that developed simultaneously with a television series. Television and Disneyland function according to similar principles, both using the techniques of extraction, reduction and recombination to create a new, anti-geographical space. The epitome of the television viewing experience--the constant and lightning-fast program changes--is also created in Disneyland with the changing programs from history and fantasy, reality and simulation. This controlled, synthetic vision of the physical world delivers a simplified, streamlined experience which serves as an alternative to the often inordinate complexity of everyday life. ³

Still today many visitors of Disney's theme parks are allured by other products of the Disney-corporation, above all by the film and television shows. Even if other strategies were tried, the tested method of cross promotion is evident in the solution to Euro Disney's initial difficulties with low visitor numbers.

The idea was reached to use the proximity to Paris was to allure a larger group of visitors. Visitors to Paris were envisioned as a new target group, and the facility was simply re-named. Additionally, Disney produced a feature film which would become the most-viewed movie in France in 1995. The film was about a young boy who had grown up in the jungle with his mother and should now get to know his father, who was living in Paris. He visits him in the city, where he comes across all of the important sights of Paris, ultimately enjoying himself in an amusement park. Famous French actors were chosen for the roles. A film with a seemingly identical plot taking place in New York premiered at the official opening of Times Square. The main role was played in this version by Tim Allen, one of the most successful actors in the Disney company roster.

The popularity of its film and cartoon products and the general acceptance of its merchandise were intensively implemented in the conception of the theme park.

The original idea was based upon using a simple zoom effect to so enlarge the cartoon figures that the viewer could observe them in their own fantasy world, interact with them, and take part in their familiar adventures. This resulted in the development of a new branch of the corporation: theme parks and the industry of animatronics.

Even though the corporation had been linked to the media of television and film from its inception, one must not forget that there were also architectural premises in the theme park scheme. Nearly everything that is typical for Disneyland can be attributed to 1867 at the latest, visible in the constituent aspects of World Fairs: the idea of separating the exhibition area from an urban context, the elimination of private traffic, and the organization of an efficient system of buses, horse-drawn trams and metro systems. Also, in terms of content, theatricalization of advanced technology in relation to a combination of story and technical showcase as "fun."

And finally, the double nature of a world exhibition as a place of entertainment and as a school of the nation. ⁴ What began with world exhibitions is brought full circle in the Disney-empire: the celebration of production has become a production of celebration.



Fig. 2.01 Jungle Cruise - Taking part in adventures

It rests the operating policy of its amusement park upon the recipe for success of its film industry: namely, to offer entertainment to the whole family, and to avoid anything that could be considered immoral or against family values. As a result, a strict prohibition of alcohol, ban on large billboard advertisements, proscription of sexual references and a strict dress code applies to guests and employees.

Employees are instructed in their own "Disney Universities," where they are made familiar with the Disney philosophy. Personnel are trained to be polite and courteous, and above all to always laugh and exude cheerfulness. In the Disney Handbook for employees, the following instructions are listed: "At Disneyland we get tired, but never bored, and even if it is a rough day, we appear happy. It's got to come from within. And to accomplish this, you've got to develop a sense of humor and a genuine interest in people. If nothing else helps, remember that you get paid for smiling." ⁵

Disney itself wants to keep the real world away from its visitors. The company formulates its objective in the following way: "Disneyland is a place where people forget their daily cares and can submerge themselves in lands of fantasy and adventure from the past or the future." ⁶ One of the many manifestations of this philosophy are the earth mounds which surround all of the Disney parks, so that visitors do not perceive the outside world.

The rigorous cleanliness of the park also contributes to the picture of a safe, problem-free world. For this reason, in Disneyland the sale of chewing gum, cotton candy and unshelled peanuts is not permitted, and picnics are discouraged. Around the clock both workers and a complicated technical system attend to the cleaning and maintenance of the park area. Light bulbs are also changed as soon as they have reached 80% of their average life expectancy, in order to never give any appearance of wear.



Fig. 2.02 Cleanliness in Disneyland

The planning and instrumentation of all Disneylands was also determined by the objective of appealing to the widest possible public, so that the facilities could speak to more or less generally prevalent feelings and interests such as nostalgia and interest in the exotic, the unknown or the future. Disney's park philosophy found its material expression in the composition of several spatially combined theme areas. Rides and other attractions are grounded in specific historical, cultural or geographical frameworks. Everything, from the layout of the park entrance and the arrangement of paths and buildings to the smallest decorative details, orients itself around the practical implementation of target images. With his choice of themes, he could tie into Disney-created film and fairy tale characters, which the visitors already recognize from the various Disney productions.

With the overall concept of Disneyland, he was able to reach back into the experience that he had already gathered in the fields of film technology and stagecraft. The scenes of a film are generally separated from one another by a clear cut. From this he developed the principle that the illusion of being in another world must not be interrupted by the fact that other areas with their own specific design were visible from one area. In this way he assigned the individual offerings of his amusement park into different themed areas, which are self-contained and as much as possible, not visible from the other areas. For the connection between the individual themed areas he developed his so-called "Star Principle." Upon arrival at the park through the main entrance, the visitor comes upon an elaborately arranged entrance area, which functions as an orientation and information zone. A main street leads the visitor to junctions leading to the individual themed areas. Meanwhile, all of the areas in every Disney park are almost seamlessly connected. The visual separation of the zones is however, still present.

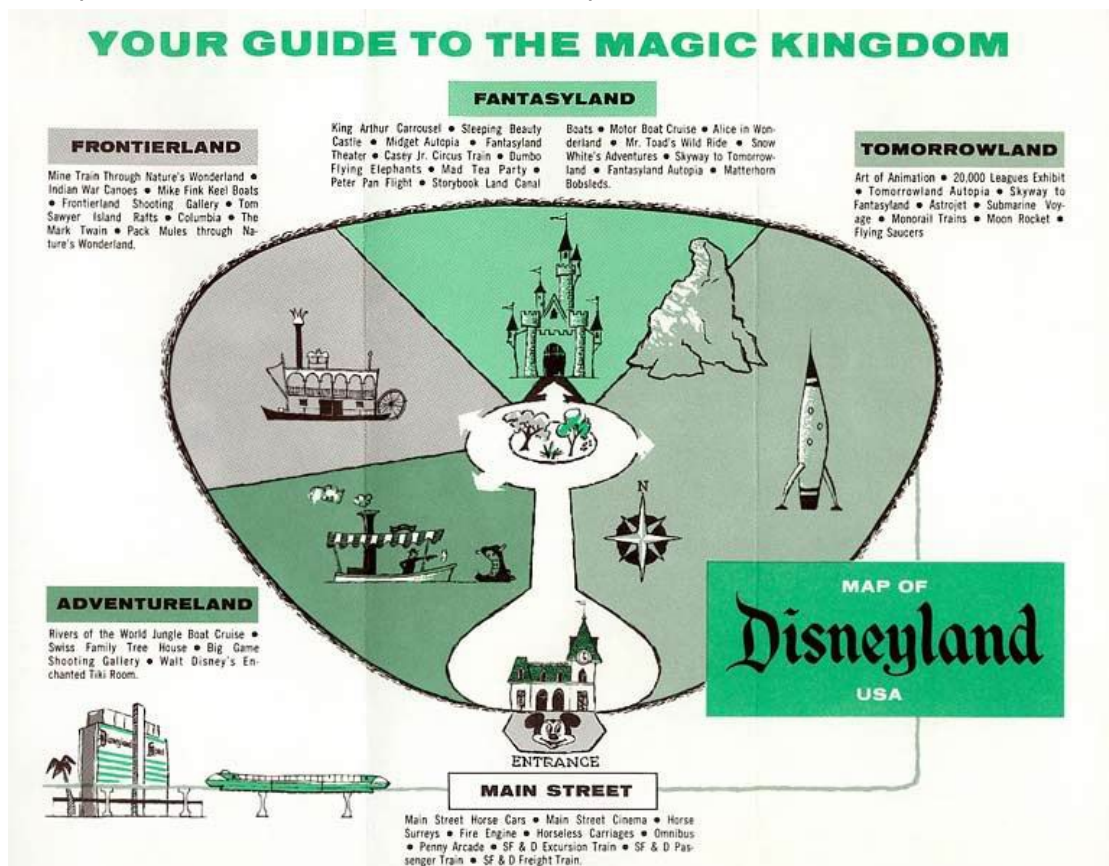


Fig. 2.03 "Star Principle" of different theme worlds

From the beginning it was a question of creating a utopia: "Disneyland will be based upon and dedicated to the ideals, the dreams and the hard facts that have created America. And it will be uniquely equipped to dramatize these dreams and facts and send them forth as a source of courage and inspiration to all the world. Disneyland will be something of a fair, an exhibition, a playground, a community center, a museum of living facts, and a showplace of beauty and magic. It will be filled with the accomplishments, the joys, the hopes of the world we live in. And it will remind us how to make those wonders part of our lives." ⁷

The objective of Walt Disney was not to reproduce but to improve. A Disney "Imagineer" (thinker-as the designers call themselves) explains the process: "What we create is a "Disney realism," sort of utopian in nature, where we carefully program out all the negative unwanted elements and program in the positive elements". ⁸ This purification of the past is characteristic for Walt Disney films, in which, for example, he transformed the barbaric horror stories of Grimm into sweet and funny cartoons. Disney employees (Imagineers) see this cleaning up of history not as an abuse of the past-they admit freely to the illusion and emphasize that that it only serves as entertainment. Yet they also insist that they bring deeper truths to light. John Hench, a head of the organization, explained in an interview that Disney has the intention of capturing the essence of a certain period. "One takes a specific style and extracts from it the inferiority that has crept in from people that never understood it, or through chance or unhappy accident that happened once and was repeated-we leave these things out and clean this style, so that it once again has its original form." ⁹



Fig. 2.04 "Cinderella-story" - Disney aesthetics



Fig. 2.05 "Aschenputtel" - Grimm's dark story

Like the French architect Violet le Duc ¹⁰, who strove to restore churches according to their original gothic ideal during the 1860s and 1870s, the original Walt strove to prevent the interruptions of time. Hench explains that in the case of Main Street, he tried to imitate the Victorian epoch, "which was possibly one of the most optimistic periods of the world, in which we all thought that advancement was wonderful and we all knew where we wanted to go. Main Street shows this direction and enthusiasm." ¹¹ The decades before and after the turn of the century had decisively rich moments. However they also contained grief, railroad strikes, battles in minefields, resentment in immigrant communities, death, local conflicts and mass Populist and Socialist protests. This history is left out, most probably because it would stress and scare off visitors. Walt wanted to comfort people. Walt's approach, though he had his roots in Hollywood, was representative of significant developments in 1950s America. The dominant culture exhibited a selective memory loss, appearing to have a happy past in order to fit a comfortable present. Leading historians trivialized and glamorized past conflicts, or even amended parts of the American past. Creepy but harmless pictures are a part of the branding of amusement parks.

Disney theme parks are more or less utopian places where Americans are hardly confronted with social grievances for reasons of salability. There death, war, dirtiness and disruptions do not have the upper hand. They represent a world without class, conflict or criminality, a world of unending consumption, a supermarket of fun.

Disneyland isn't just an amusement park with carousel rides. Rather, it is much more a systematic entertainment area, whose complex design, image and presentation of its unifying concept plays a more important role than other aspects of amusement. While in classic amusement parks experiences of extreme movement and defiance of gravity allow the visitor to escape reality, at Disneyland the decorative framework is more crucial. Nothing is permitted to remind visitors of familiar reality. The strategy adheres to perfect illusion.

According to Reiner Banham ¹², Disneyland sets the scene for a movie-not one that is filmed, but one that takes place only in the mind of the visitor.

After the classical amusement park set the stage for physical sensations with its rides, and the theme park turned itself into a stage for optical illusions, Imagineers are switching on the virtual experience generators in order to create electronic hallucinations for their visitors. Artificial worlds in Disneyland are therefore constituted of the crossover of media and vehicles. The movement of the visitors is strictly regulated within these classical fantasy worlds made of stage scenery, especially when they find themselves in a vehicle. The role of the visitor is reduced to that of a controlled observer with a privileged perspective, one however, without the possibility to reach in and actively interact with the scenery. The use of 3D technology pulls visitors even deeper into the Disney world, so that they may place themselves in the actions onscreen as observers and actors in rides such as Star Tours or Micro Adventures. Despite this, they remain passive observers, acting according to a predetermined script.

2.2 Animated Architecture

Disneyland has always ignored serious architectural history. This phenomenon simply did not exist for their story line, which was based upon a utopia of modernity. Disneyland is considered aesthetically reactionary and "dangerous."

Even the similarity between the central layout with a radial street network and Ebenezer Howard's diagram for his "garden cities of tomorrow" was not enough to designate Disneyland as anything other than "a degenerate utopia".¹³ Today many architects and architectural critics still agree with this description.

The architects of the sixties were somewhat more enthusiastic, even praising the partially reclaimed small town identity near the California suburbs. Charles Eames is reproached as having a weakness for Disneyland. In 1965 Charles W. Moore described Disneyland in all seriousness as "the most important small structure in the West of the last few decades." According to Moore 11, Disney succeeded in creating an authentic setting for public life within a sea of chaotically strewn single family houses. James Rouse, head builder of new cities and historical shopping centers on Main Street, explained at a Harvard lecture that Disneyland "is the best work of urban construction in the United States today."¹⁴

Peter Blake declared the Disney aesthetic abhorrent and "aggravating," but simultaneously admitted that with regard to their advanced traffic and waste disposal systems, Disney parks are the only interesting new cities in the United States. Concerning the gigantic Epcot Center, he writes: "...what a wonderfully imaginative idea to propose a vast, living, ever-changing laboratory of urban design".¹⁵ He jokingly suggested handing over Manhattan to Disney for repairs. Moore's generation felt that Disneyland's traffic system was successful. In this utopia, public transportation and its users, the pedestrians, have precedence. The only private automobiles in the Disney parks are the toy vehicles on the miniature motorway, with which the visitors can imitate the real freeway chaos they have just escaped. They have left their own cars in the gigantic parking lots.

All Disneylands follow the same scheme, with themed areas radiating in a star-pattern from a central landmark which flow into each other. The street level is reserved for pedestrians, the air space and boundary areas are occupied by cable cars, monorails and trains. The area is surrounded by a complex of hotels, which range from high-end to affordable motels. The visitor usually arrives at the park in a private car, parks it on the edge of a parking lot and from that point is underway with the park's transportation system.



Fig. 2.06 Disneyworld Orlando

The historian Stanislaus van Moos ¹⁶ interprets Disneyland as a reconstructed and withered collage of the constructed obsession and suppressed mythologies of the 19th century. Almost all marks of Disneyland belong to the standard components of every World's Fair since 1867. To begin with, the concept of space, the separation of the exhibition area from its urban context, the prohibition of private automobiles and the organization of an efficient bus system, horse-pulled streetcars and subways. Then there is the theatrical presentation of advanced technology, as in the "Galerie des Machines" ¹⁷ from 1897, whose ovoid form serves as a variation of the Colosseum prototype. And last, the presentation of cultures foreign to us expressed in time and space, in which eclectic national pavilions are arranged around the Gallery of Machines. And finally: the double nature of the World's Fair as sites of entertainment and as the "School of the Nation." Van Moos asserts that Disney architecture would also be partially a variation of the architecture of the fifties. In a period in which many European cities were confronted with the rebuilding of their devastated centers after the war, Main Street in Disneyland was the American version of the then-relevant architectural challenge in Europe. The pedestrian cult and the prohibition of automobiles made Disneyland the blind passenger of the CIAM avant-garde and the quiet partner of the "multifloored city" ¹⁸ of Viktor Gruen. Even Le Corbusier served Disneyland in connection with the project for Antwerp, for which he suggested the transportation system of Venice.

Critical Americans like M. Sorkin ¹⁹ and R. Sennet ²⁰ recognize in Disneyland only the commercialization and the total sellout of the "urban" because they longingly look back at the supposed authenticity of the European tradition. As Europeans, we know by now how even this authenticity can result in touristy production.

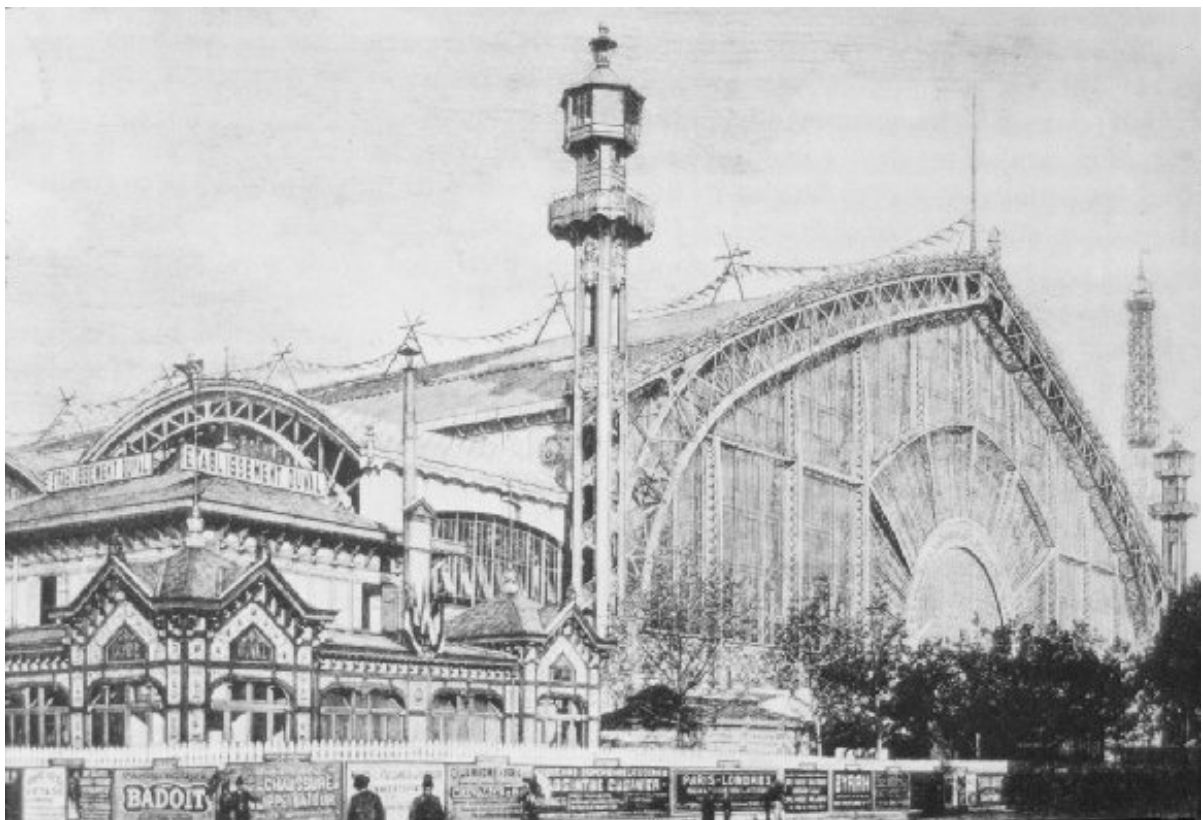


Fig. 2.07 Galerie des Machines, Paris, Charles Louis Ferdinand Dutert

The vibrant core of the whole operation is quintessentially the unmerciful commerce of Main Street, with its nostalgia, its miniaturization, its programmatic pluralism and eclecticism of style. Here there are souvenir shops, snack bars, tea houses, cinemas—all built three-eighths smaller than their originals.

Miniaturization, in terms of “forced perspective,”²¹ belongs to the list of classic film tricks. At the same time, these “tricks” are a piece of the standard repertory in landscape and exhibition architecture. They are a component of the preprogrammed design, even from Palladio and Scamozzi to the Philip Johnson House in New Canaan. Furthermore, miniaturization is the universal quality of toys. As soon as he enters the theme park, the visitor, who is separated from his automobile, is “confined in size” as a child again. The houses on the main street pull him in to the game. It is just like entering a fairy tale.

The manifold architectural engagements indicate that Disney’s primary priority is to create the illusion of an overall harmony. The organization of the park area is based upon the principle of montage of various sequences in front of a carefully composed backdrop. In order to prevent the closely adjacent environments from being too colorfully thrown together and appearing too arbitrary, the arrangement of outdoor spaces, pathways and perspectives was assigned to experienced professionals.

The cinematic concept of montage of individual sequences and cuts of various themes is accomplished by “Imagineers.” The Imagineers are architects and engineers of images and performances and simultaneously dramaturges and designers. All media are available to them, from the most modern computer-controlled robots to the simplest theatrical tricks. Achieving the desired effect is singly important. The spaces seen by visitors are outfitted to the highest grade; between them are structural elements, concealed service rooms and infrastructure. The buildings, like the park, are drafted around pictorial viewpoints. The borders between landscape and architecture are fluent and elastic.

In his analysis “Learning from Las Vegas,” Venturi describes the two types of construction, “Duck” and “Decorated Shed,” as forms of striking, symbolic architecture. With the term “Duck,” he characterizes the types of buildings in which a symbolic form dominates the construction, and the whole building takes on the character of a sculpture. With “Decorated Shed,” on the other hand, the whole of the building is put completely in the service of its use and function—for this reason, symbolic adornments are restricted to the facade. In my opinion, theme and amusement parks deal with the intersection of a “Shell” for shows and film presentations and a spectacular “Sculpture” of roller coasters and fantasy landscapes. Although one can perceive both as variations of the “Decorated Shed,” in which the decoration is continued throughout the interior of the building and the “Shed” serves as decoration simply as a black box.²²

The theme parks are familiar to the visitor from beginning to end, because they are realizations of Disney films, well-known clichés or athletic highlights. For every age group these worlds offer magic, fantasy and spectacular adventure. Every theme is reduced to its characteristic attributes, and therefore made easily consumable. The specific is reduced to the lowest discernible denominator. In this way a world is created, a world which pulls one quickly into its spell, a world which is highly recognizable and is able to be experienced and comprehended in a straightforward framework. The most important goal is the creation of an effect which will directly interact with the senses. This effect must not create any demand to interpret; unambiguousness is required--and the same is true for moral normative statements.

Every experience and every theme is equally significant, everything works toward complete amusement. Theme parks make a "regulated vision of amusement"²³ into reality; every tree, every sight and every movement are controlled to the last detail. The simulated model is preferred by many-a Venice without the unpleasant odor of the Canale Grande, a Paris without language barriers. A strictly controlled version of reality is presented everywhere, backed by a perfectly staged story line.

The largest amount of the visitor's time in each of the individual theme parks is spent waiting in lines. At the beginning of every attraction, one receives exact information regarding how long the wait time is before arriving at the actual destination. The wait time is often an hour or more; accordingly, the route of the wait must be celebrated. There are pictures, 3D animations, background music and acoustic and visual compositions of the destination in order to prevent those waiting from giving up. The entire time one is prepared for the upcoming experience. At the end of each theme area stands a corresponding shop with souvenirs, commemorative photos, etc. In this way, a connection to each theme area is not only gradually generated, but the experience can also be taken home in the form of a coffee mug. Each area is commercialized from A to Z.

The urgency of a future visit is then later suggested to the visitor when he passes the advertisements for upcoming attractions and shows. One leaves the park with assurance, with the feeling of having experienced a lot, even if by far he was not able to see everything.



Fig. 2.10 "Neuschwanstein", Bavaria



Fig. 2.11 Cinderella Castle, California

Architects around the Mouse

In the last two decades, Walt Disney World Resort has become a showcase of architecture. When Michael Eisner became the president of the Walt Disney Company in 1984, he looked for architects who would be complex and never boring; Eisner said that he hoped that the structures would “have the beauty and strength to outlast time.” Disney has become one of the leading patrons of architecture in the world. At the Walt Disney World Resort, more than a dozen world-famous architects have designed a range of hotels, office buildings and structures that serve the goal of relaxation. These buildings have garnered worldwide attention as well as countless architectural awards.

The architects that were chosen to design for Walt Disney come from companies across three continents. Among them are winners of many of the world’s most prestigious architectural awards. As in the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney’s MGM Studios and Disney’s Animal Kingdom, the architecture of the hotels, resorts offices and service facilities revolves around a specific theme. In most cases, the themes are of an historical or geographic nature, others reference pop culture. Several of the architects took the idea of “theme-oriented architecture” literally, while others offer more abstract interpretations. Here is a glance at a few of these architects, commissioned to work for the Walt Disney World Resort:



Fig. 2.12 Thematized architecture

The first who must be mentioned in this context is the New York based Robert A. M. Stern, an architect consistently associated with two areas: meticulously historicized “classicism” and colorful “postmodern style.” For many years Stern was a professor at Columbia University in New York, eventually becoming dean of the architecture department at Yale. As early as the 1980s, Stern had already designed important structures for Disney. He was, among other things, architect for Disney’s Yacht and Beach Club Resorts, Disney’s Boardwalk and the Casting Center. The Yacht and Beach Club Resort was designed to reflect two distinctly American architectural styles established in the resorts of the 19th century. In 1992 he became a member of the board of directors of the Walt Disney Company. The Japanese architect Arata Isozaki designed the Team Disney Buildings. Although many of Disney’s buildings have obvious themes, this one is more abstract. Its theme, in the architect’s opinion, is “time.” The centerpiece of the structure is a ball-shaped fixture which houses a sundial. Isozaki, the architect of the Olympic stadium in Barcelona and the Museum of Modern Art in Los Angeles, was the recipient of the Pritzker Prize in Architecture.

Michael Graves, from Princeton, New Jersey, is the architect of the Walt Disney World Swan and Walt Disney World Dolphin Hotels. ²⁴ The pyramid-shaped Dolphin, administered for the Walt Disney corporation by Sheraton International, is topped with a 63-foot tall dolphin. The swan, operated by Westin Resorts, has a slightly bow-shaped roofline and is crowned with 47-foot tall swans. Graves is also the architect of the Post Office of Celebration. He is a professor of architecture at Princeton University and is world renowned for his architecture and product design. Arquitectonica of Miami designed Disney’s All-Star Resorts to reflect America’s most popular pastime. All-Star Sports has sections dedicated to football, baseball, basketball and surfing. All-Star Music plays Jazz, Calypso, Folk, Rock ‘n’ Roll and Broadway musicals. The architects use huge surfboards, umpires’ whistles, banjos, saxophones and other symbolic objects to decorate the balustrades, columns and stairways.



Fig. 2.13 Disney’s Boardwalk, Robert Stern

Euro Disneyland in Paris was worked on by Frank Gehry (the Grid Building) and Antoine Predock (the Happy Trails Motel), as well as Antoine Grumbach, Michael Graves and Robert Stern. Hans Hollein, Rem Koolhaas, Aldo Rossi and Bernard Tschumi, as well as Antoine Grumbach, Jean Novel and Christian de Portzamparc were also invited to participate in discussions. The principle which stands behind all of Disney's buildings is the creation of an icon. Decoration of spaces, background music, the menu offerings, the uniforms of personnel—all must work toward a common theme. Everything must be adapted to the European audience, yet American motifs should also be thematized and implemented. Similarly, a hotel designed by Michael Graves in New York references Manhattan with its five towers, just as the Cheyenne Hotel by Robert Stern was designed to recall a Western town. The Santa Fe Hotel by Predock with its adobe-plastered pueblos in traditional color tones is reminiscent of New Mexico.

Michael Eisner calls the result of his corporate policy "entertainment architecture".²⁵

Michael Graves and Robert A. M. Stern are of the opinion that the entertainment architecture should not be measured by the same standards as so-called serious architecture, but rather with judged from a more populist perspective--whether it appeals to people; "whether it is fun for people." As with kitsch, the principle lies in using exaggeration to impress. Disney architecture is entertainment architecture par excellence, in which Disney's world of imagery is seamlessly translated into its architecture. In these architectural forms of mass consumption, entertainment value is more important than nutritive value. The bottom line is the fun factor.



Fig. 2.14 New York Hotel, Disneyland Paris, Michael Graves

Imagineers

Walt Disney Imagineering used to be called WED Enterprises (Walt Elias Disney Enterprises); it was and is composed of a group of architects and designers who are responsible for designing the composition of the Disney theme parks, EPCOT and Celebration. "Imagineering" is derived from the fusion of the words "imagination" and "engineering," and is a typical Disney neologism. Imagineering describes the activity of the engineers, architects and multimedia specialists who designed Disneyland and Disney World. Meanwhile, the term has become autonomous and stands for the production of pictures which circulate successfully. All designs begin with services which are neglected in traditionally operating offices: logo designs, campaign and branding concepts, strategic marketing, formulation of an image economy.

The following dictum, which Disney enacted for its Imagineers, appropriately describes its expectations: "All I want you to think about is when people walk through...anything you design, I want them, when they leave, to have smiles on their faces".²⁶

Marty Sklar, the Vice President of Walt Disney Imagineering, names three reasons why it took so long for the Imagineers to receive the recognition which they, in her opinion, deserve.²⁷

First, traditional museums do not recognize the world of theme parks--respectively, the artistic work and the artists who stand behind it--as worthy of being displayed in their hallowed halls.

The second reason is that the Imagineers who produced the more than fifty thousand works fashioned for the Disney theme parks have been classified, only to be brought out by special permission--if, for example, the work serves as a model for future projects.

And thirdly, because the attitude of Disney Management was that WED Enterprises should remain as invisible as possible to the general public. Furthermore the assumption was that the general public had no interest in learning about the development of the theme park anyway. Sklar even goes so far as to compare the work of the Imagineers with the architecture of the Renaissance. He means that in the same way that the the architects of the Renaissance were inspired by the sketches of Leonardo da Vinci or Michaelangelo, the Imagineers were inspired by the drawings of Ryman, Hench, McKim, etc.

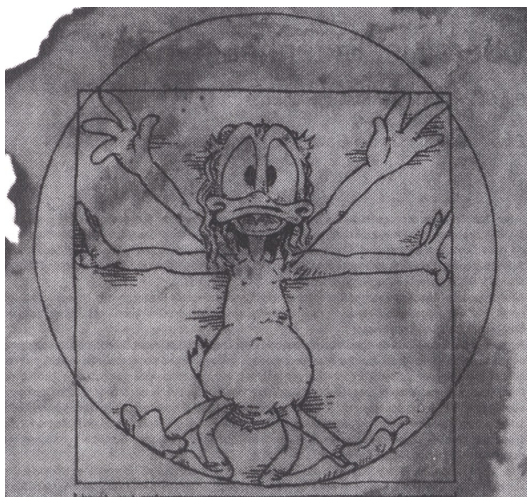


Fig. 2.15 Disney- Da Vinci drawing

To give a glimpse into the relationship that Walt Disney had with the famous architects of his time, I would like to mention the following facts: the first sketch from William Pereira and Charles Luckman Architects for Disneyland was rejected immediately because it did not resemble Disney's own image of his theme park. A draft by Frank Lloyd Wright for a building on Main Street was also discarded because, in Disney's opinion, it did not address the needs of the visitor. Instead, Disney drew in California Architect Welton Becket for his ideas. Becket preferred an image-rich Architecture-just like Walt Disney. Disney also advised Becket to engage Marvin Davis. David had a degree in Architecture, but was Art Director at 20th Century-Fox. He had an intuition for building sets exactly according to the wishes of the director. Walt Disney also employed Herb Ryman to make the plans for Disneyland palatable to investors. Ryman was a painter and an illustrator. Instead of blueprints, he was to draw colorful scenes, detailed and communicative of the appropriate sentiment. With the collaboration of artists from various areas, the cornerstone of Walt Disney Imagineering was also laid.

In architecture there are two ever-cited principles. On the one hand, "form follows function" from Louis H. Sullivan, and "firmitas, utilitas, venustas" from Vitruvius. On the basis of these two principles are affixed the intersections where architecture and the work of the Imagineers meet--or rather, the intersections as the architects understand them. The "Ford" model, "form follows function," is replaced by "form follows emotion." Thus, today the increased attention is directed towards the production and distribution of product images. The ratio of packaging to content has reversed itself. Whereas once the packaging served the content, now the one must serve the other. Merchandising a product means declaring a vision. Therewith, the time of the "Imagineers" has definitely come. ²⁸

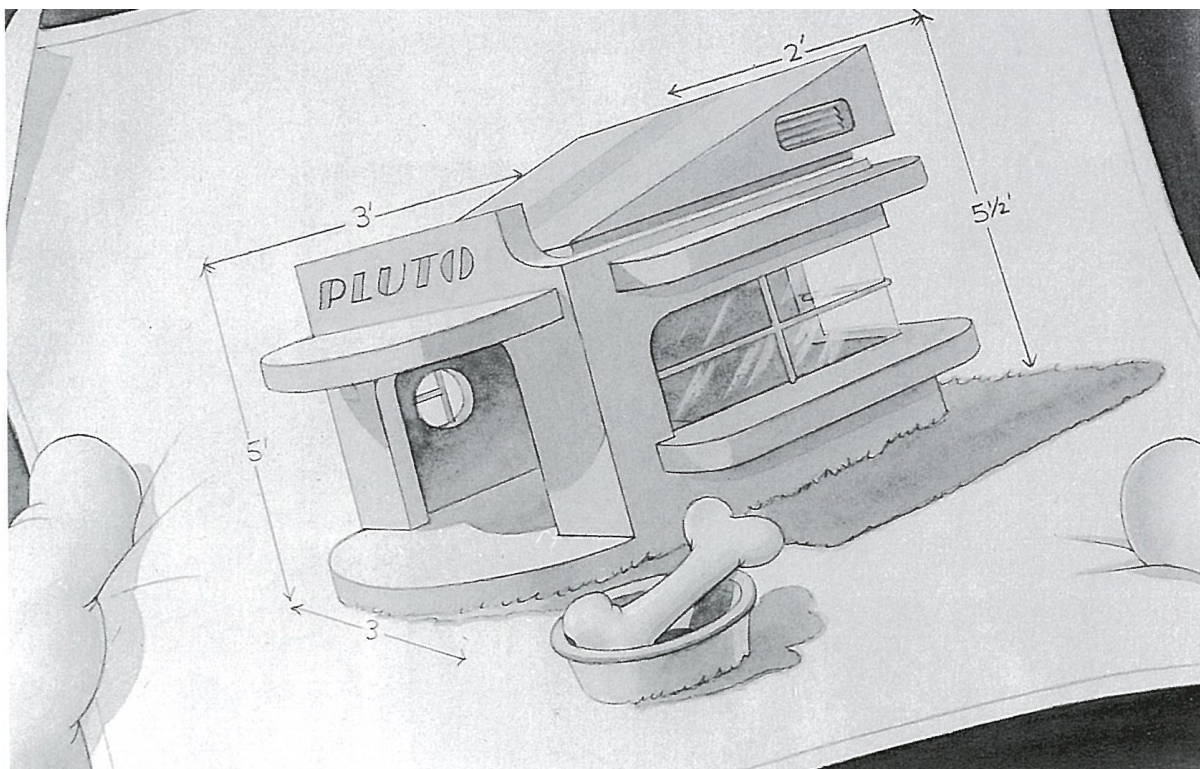


Fig. 2.16 Disney and Modernism

The buildings on Main Street, for example, suggest to the visitors that they are in a street lined with various houses. In reality, however, they are not individual houses, but simply one long facade which, like stage scenery, covers a structure behind it.

"There it is a matter of the fiction of an American small town main street. Small sectioned facades feign subdivided perimeter block development and mixed use, while they actually conceal large sales and service floors. The original Main Street is certainly a fiction itself - the small town scenery of the film studios in Hollywood".²⁹

Here the parallels to theater or film again become clear: "This street is nothing more than a private stage, where the visitors become the observers of a play called 'public space,' and in whose performance they simultaneously participate. In this way Disney achieves a "secret stage direction," the appearance of creating something that is increasingly missed in real life: the urban city".³⁰

Even the category "dimension" differentiates architecture from the mural-like Disney architecture. While in architecture one works in three dimensions, the Imagineers shift between the second and third dimensions. The view of the buildings, the facades, are important. Unlike stagecraft, the three-dimensionality cannot be simulated by forced-perspective drawings, but rather is experienceable reality.

For example, Granny Kincaid's cottage from the set of the film "So Dear to my Heart" was directly integrated by Walt Disney into the early plans for Disneyland.



Fig. 2.17 Disneyland Paris Main Street - the play of public space

In architecture, buildings stand and function for themselves alone, without the need for additional actors or staging. The users themselves are the actors. In the theme parks, without the productions that happen all around them, the buildings have little or no reason to exist. The visitors have little possibility to determine events themselves--everything follows a stage direction and the visitors are more or less passive consumers. To further stress the analogy to stage or film scenery, a production in theater or film places the actors in the foreground and the scenery as just an accessory.

The commissioning of architects functions in the following way: first there is an assignment, and then there is a blueprint. The process at Walt Disney Imagineering works in the opposite way. There the blueprint comes first, and only then are the investors sought.

The mode of operation and process must therefore be adapted:

"Start with your best stuff, your boldest, wildest idea and paint it in absolutely convincing detail".³¹ This process is called "Eyewash." Its purpose is to persuade investors. If one can imagine it, then it can probably also be built.

While in architecture the architect of the structure is usually well-known, with the Imagineers it is ensured that they remain unknown "creators." The impression communicated should be that the buildings have always been there, and that no architect or designer planned them.

"We have been here for a long, long time".³²

2.3 Safety / Cleanliness / Supervision

Disney maintains that "Mickey is a clean mouse." He is harmless, asexual and hairless. Mickey is an artificial being that exists in the same relationship to human subjectivity as Disneyland to urbanity. The outward appearance of the mouse is carefully engineered to appear lovable, sweet and genteel. The proportions of the head and body parts were derived from that of a human baby in order to engender the sympathies of adults. The mechanical mouse is an assembly line product of entertainers and clearly a decisive act of permutation: at Disney, nature is illusion and machine is reality.

The Disney trademark of the early days shares only an outward resemblance with the mouse of ensuing decades. The cheeky, wild, impetuous and superficial character of the cartoon films and comic books of the first two or three decades weakens in the era following the Second World War to favor earnestness and order. The television moderator and Donald Duck fan Hella von Sinnen later was moved to declare that the former jack-of-all-trades had mutated into a "boring know-it-all."



Fig. 2.18 Mickey Mouse - harmless, asexual and hairless

Visitors to the park are communicated to through the language of the architecture, the selection and handling of the themes, and of course through the all but celebrated cleanliness inside the park that imparts the feeling of security. Custodians are constantly in action, there is neither trash on the streets or overflowing containers. The conveyance of nostalgia and small town ambiance do the rest. For the urban sociologist Frank Roost, Disneyland is a fully planned entertainment area, whose construction and color-happy scheme promises its visitors variety, and at the same time perfect organization, and whose use of familiar motives emanates trust and safety. In this way, visitors find themselves in a condition in which stimulation and security are simultaneous, so that that customer may engage in consumption. ³³

The facilities are patrolled by their own park security and are almost seamlessly surveilled by cameras. This surveillance is the constant companion of the commercial activity in the park--its scope is extreme, yet barely visible. The visitor does not just agree with it, but even values it and conforms to the system. Park direction determines the behavior of the visitor, and guards stand at the ready to intervene in misconduct. In this way, park operators can select specific target groups from the public.

The first of these target groups is the white, conservative, middle class, family vacationers who are ready to invest a lot of money in a short amount of time. The security concept is particularly well assimilated into this group. The behavioral pattern and the perception of most people has become accustomed and adapted to certain controlled scenarios. Especially in the suburban regions around large American cities, public transit is laid out to accommodate individual transportation, and people spend their free time in privatized and controlled institutions (golf clubs, shopping malls, etc.). Everywhere in the United States there are zones which are protected from undesired trespassers--there are private security services, video surveillance, even trash cans are wrapped in barbed wire to protect them from the access of the poor. Inside the park people also move according to their class distinction. One either has dinner in cheap fast food restaurants or enjoys the evening in a luxury establishment, and the same holds true for the hotels.

The central role of Main Street U.S.A. in every park originates very simply from everyday life. Main Street represents the small town ideal, the classical values like family, security and community. On the other side is reality, especially that of the areas of high population density in America. The original center is pushed to the periphery, to a "central business district:" an office headquarters which simultaneously functions as an entertainment area for the constantly rising number of homeless people. The result is a city without real inhabitants, but rather a noticeable number of potential consumers. They all move within a utopia, in the comic version of a perfect city; reality is negated, recreation and relaxation quickly replace work.

All Disney localities embody a technocratic, postindustrial utopia, characterized by an abundance of consumption and freedom. There, the industrial reserve army that was assembled in the 19th century and rationalized in the 20th is transformed into a giant recreation army.³⁴ The relationship between work and free time, cleanliness and security, and even order and chaos was a guiding theme of Disney's utopian vision, which was best expressed by the then-unrealized plans for EPCOT.

Suppression of contradictions as an important characteristic of the Disney paradise wasn't limited to the visual level, but shows itself also in the elaborate company structure and a perfect organization. While the classic amusement park is more or less stamped with a hectic disorder, Disney holds itself to perfect organization. More and more Disney was unsatisfied with the development around Anaheim. Like so many world fairs, Disney found himself besieged by an inordinate periphery. The enormous success of the park led to more and more investors buying up the surrounding properties, which soon developed into a confusion of hotels and commercial establishments. More than by the fact that he lost millions of dollars to others, Disney was hurt by the disorder and sleaze that clouded his vision.



Fig. 2.19 Representing small-town ideals - classical values like family, security and community

This experience was pivotal to Disney's next project in Florida. The new facility would not only include a theme park after the Anaheim model, but also its own city of Epcot, in which, at the beginning, only his employees would live. His vision was to offer people a way of life that was impossible anywhere on earth. To this end he negotiated with the government of Florida to receive unparalleled concessions, which would grant him almost sovereign authority over his own kingdom (Police power, the right to levy taxes, self-government, and freedom from all governmental restrictions, among others). Disney's death prevented this dream coming true. Because his successors did not share his vision, Epcot was reduced to a normal theme park. But the shattered dream of the perfect city was compensated with the simulation of urban flair. Set designers project post card clichés of various metropolises onto walk-through facades, which invite guests to stroll through cosmopolitan walkways, from Mexico's pyramids to the Venetian palace on St. Mark's Square. Everything is, of course, observed by the watchful eyes of the countless surveillance cameras and security personnel. Visitors can enjoy the urban simulacrum without risk or danger. Without noticing it, the visitors are committed to a code of strictly predefined possible scenarios in this experiential realm. During the ride the visitor has a set role to fill, one without individual influence on the outcome or sequence of events. The last exercise of individual freedom is the decision to accept or decline the all-inclusive package. The ride is a cloned experiential unit, a product that is precisely and reliably produced and consumed in an endless series. Furthermore, scrupulous separation of individual events prevents any interferences or anything unexpected. With carefully camouflaged surveillance and the offensive politeness of employees (cast members), these smiling and almost unnoticeable authorities usher visitors through the predetermined course of events, forcing them into specified paths.

Visual coherence, spatial control, fastidious cleanliness, calculable experiences and private management have all become the hallmarks of theme parks under Disney's direction.

The work that takes place inside the park itself is largely conducted underground. Directly underneath the park is a network of all its supply units. In this way, Disney personnel can arrive at work in shifts, and all deliveries and pick-ups can be conducted without disturbing the visitor. This system is complemented by broader technical facilities. Disney World in Orlando employs a pneumatic waste removal system, so that the sight of collectors does not disturb the beautiful illusion of the theme park. Waste is sucked from the bins with high pressure through an underground system of pipes to a collection site.

Disney greatly values the visitor's feeling of being cared for by personnel who are highly trained in friendliness. To this end, "cast members" (employees) must follow a strict set of behavioral guidelines: "The Disney ideals of order, cleanliness and harmonious family life also determine the behavioral regulations of employees." Euro Disney in Paris requires from their male employees "that their weight must be kept in harmony with their height." The regulations for women are even more restrictive. "Their nails must not extend more than seven millimeters past the end of the finger".³⁵

Meanwhile, the corporation is known for rigorous discipline of their workers. In the professionally structured dream world of the Disney corporation--which consists of theme parks, hotels, restaurants, shopping malls, vacation resorts and housing estates--employees often work for minimum wage, and are trained in seminars about correct attire, hairstyle, makeup and smiling. Although theme park employees must abide by strict behavioral guidelines, there are still distinctions between front-stage, backstage and break time. But with the social experiment of "Celebration," the corporation abuses the private living space of the inhabitants; every weekend they become an exhibition for the countless tourists bussed in from Disney World.



Fig. 2.20 Disney staff - a strict set of behavioral guidelines

2.4 Organized Variety / The Foreign and the Familiar

American sociologists often describe the visit to a Disney world as a pilgrimage that everyone must make twice: once as a child, and then as an adult with one's own children. It is an issue of the enhancement of normalcy in an alternate world, one in which the continuity of the American small family renews its reality through fiction.

"It was always only partially about the recognition of the unfamiliar. Much more the visitors are looking for the sensual experience of imaginary worlds, the reality of fiction. Experiences of travel are staged and constructed to this end, and the elements of reality are rearranged in new combinations."³⁶

Creative geography allows for the assembly of a large spectacle of possible experiences, which can be erected anywhere, irrespective of location.

Important elements of today's theme parks were already visible in their predecessors of the mid- to late 19th century. Just like mass tourism, the idea of a simulated journey definitively influenced modern amusement parks in the sense of organized variety. Above all the World's Fairs played an important role. Among other attractions at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 were exotic cultural environments.³⁷

The Midway Plaisance combined the actual exhibition area with an amusement park. The visitors could observe reproductions of towns from all over the world. Organized in a sectoral form that is also frequently used in theme worlds today (division into zones), the streets of Cairo with a mosque and belly dancers were to be seen next to an Irish village. 300 natives of Java, Fiji and other Pacific archipelagoes tended the authentic atmosphere of a south sea village.

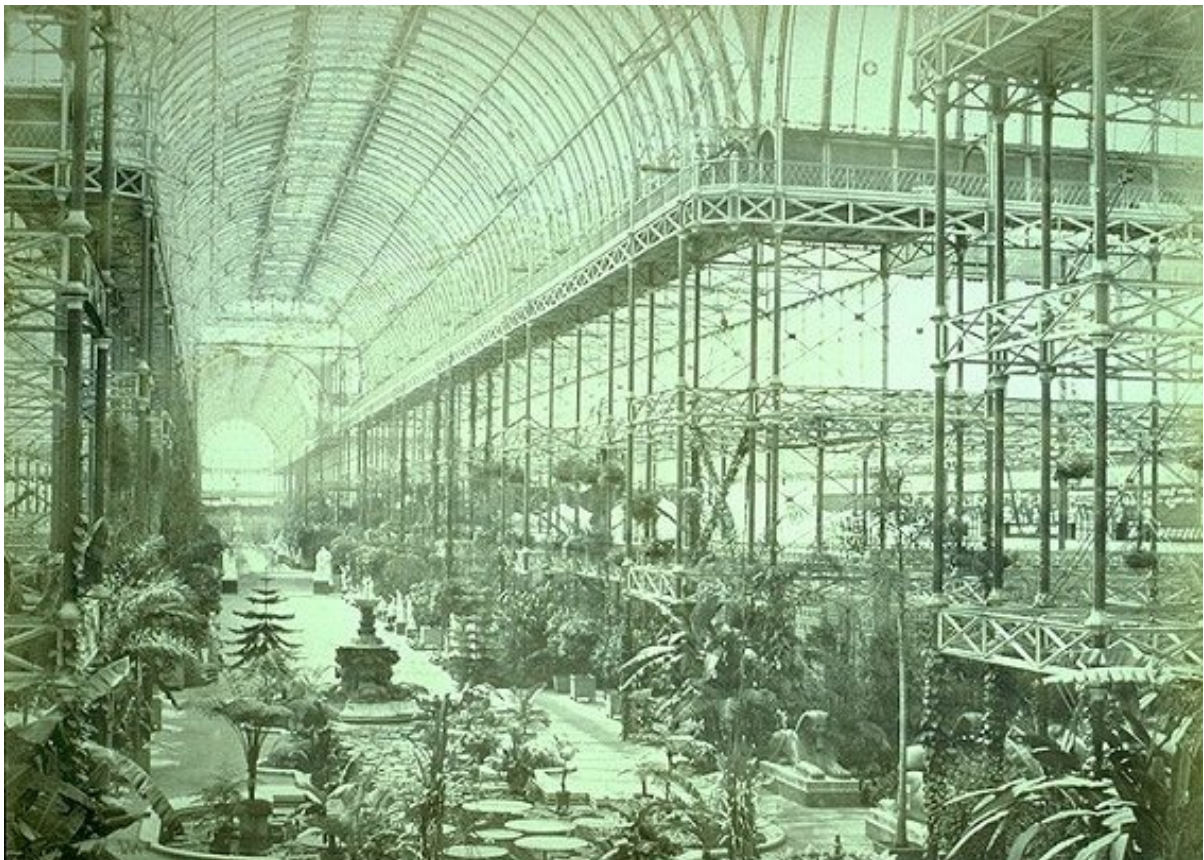


Fig. 2.21 Crystal Palace, London World Fair 1851, Joseph Paxton

The London World's Fair in 1851, said to have assembled the riches of the nation, is in many ways the archetype of an international shopping mall. "Under one roof," in a glass palace, in the middle of a tropical landscape, the world was presented as a global marketplace, represented by its goods. A new historical landscape emerged, in which the area itself had become a product (commodified space). Next to the settlement and marketplace areas and the space used as a stage for the representation of power, we are also confronted with space as a medium for memory and desire.³⁸

The visitation of a space such as this is a virtual trip.

Generally, opposite the attitude of the foreign dominates that of curiosity; it allows the individual to open himself to the foreign and tame his fears of it from a safe distance. At the same time, the foreign is ascribed a certain appeal, just as it is reduced to its marketable attributes. It is a matter of creating a simplified, compromised, sublimated essence of a culture, which will be memorable to the average tourist after his return home.

Theme worlds mirror and reproduce the tourist experience of the world as a consumable place. Cultural experience in this sense means meeting with "hypercultures".³⁹

A good example of this type of hypercultural interpretation of the foreign is Disney's EPCOT center. Plans for EPCOT were displayed at the World's Fair in 1964 in New York within a Disney attraction. The Chicago World's Fair was cited as the model for the plans. The park, opened in Orlando in 1982, resembles a permanent World's Fair. Next to its Future World Pavilions, in which companies display their innovations, EPCOT also features a World Showcase with eleven nations, among which are the USA, Morocco, Germany and Japan. France is represented by the Eiffel Tower, Norway by a Viking attraction.

Theme worlds are however, not merely places in which perceptions of cultural differences materialize, but also settings for productions of a cultural perception of self.

At the World's Fair in Chicago, for example, through the manner of exhibition not only was the bias of white superiority expressed, but also the perception of the world of non-whites as childish and uncivilized.

The making of foreign cultures into something exotic necessitates a perfecting of details and a high degree of authenticity in the implementation. The tiles for the houses in Huis ten Bosch (a theme park in Japan) were imported from Holland.

In this regard it is important to realize that the border between interior and exterior is constantly shifting. The borderlines that separate the familiar from the foreign are moveable. And elastic. Culture should be conceived not as an essence, but rather as a dynamic process. From this perspective theme parks are among the gateways of global consumer culture ("interfaces of confrontation and interpenetration").⁴⁰ They establish places in which differences are organized.

Authenticity

Critics complain that the authenticity of target areas has been lost to tourists, whereby reality is more and more tailored to the needs and desires of tourism.

Staged Authenticity ⁴¹ refers to festivals put on for tourists, meant to allure them with their historic architecture and native people. We can, on the other hand, take the example of the Renaissance, which above all is characterized by the impulse to resurrect the culture of past epochs. One can also ask oneself whether the remaining Greek sculptures are authentic as they appear today. They lack, among other things, the colorful painting that the Greeks prized. The complete reconstructions of Disney would be perhaps more real and believable than the washed-out whiteish-grey torsos displayed in the Munich Glyptothek. ⁴²

Theme parks copy verbatim that which in the European culture is regarded as not copyable because it is bound to a specific place and culture. Because European heritage seems unimitable in its ethnic, "atmospheric" and emotional components and as a part of everyday culture. However, the theme parks copy their originals with the pretense of perfection. As uniquely non-interchangeable copies, the parks are not mass products, and in this way differentiate themselves from the modern technology of the assembly line and its endless reproduction. They also differentiate themselves, though not at first glance, from the technologies of the postmodern, from the pastiche, the collages of technologies and the simulacrum that are characterized by this principle of arbitrary reproducibility. Of course, it is clear that in the eyes of many critics that the philosophy of the theme park is an assault on the cult of the authentic and European modernism, where originality holds claim on universal validity.

Theme parks in this sense are machines of the separation of technical and scientific modernity from its cultural components. They fall, therefore, neither in the category of the modern nor in that of postmodern practice. They stand somewhere in between and represent forms of a new cultural production and experience in a globalized world, whose borders are yet today immeasurable.

Disneyland shows its character as a manufactured utopia, as a country which has neither place nor time, as a "world of its own." The past and the present, real and make-believe artifacts from different times and the most diverse places, traditional fairy tale treasures and new discoveries will be confusedly mixed and merged.

Through the perfection of their own artificiality, Disney achieves an authenticity and autonomy which lends it authority. The question of real or fake is pushed into the background, because the whole environment complies to an overall design.

Precisely for this reason it is worth discussing the exploitation of a place's history as a medium for researching identity. The conflict of the local with the global is so explosive because history thrives more and more on the level of spectacle and decorative superficiality, and becomes in this way just as questionable as artificial spaces, urban sensory worlds with freely chosen histories and themes.

Cultural Hybridization

As a cultural form theme worlds are a piece of the material culture of a society through which it represents itself. Although they primarily serve to entertain, they are also a mirror of their societal and cultural environment. As a product of the American entertainment industry, they are considered places and institutions which embody the myths and symbols of the American dream. What happens when a cultural form leaves its context of origin and finds access to other countries? Many see in this a victory of a cultural imperialism of the West, a type of globalization which represents a westernization, and replaces local distinctions with transnational symbolic forms. Others (such as Friedman and Ritzer) are of the opinion that this is the case of a cultural hybridization, according to the motto, "local' is a global product." General developments in the global culture of consumption are adapted in various ways, so that variety in the world is preserved and renewed.

In the transfer of culture from one place to another, marketplaces and canals are built, in which culture can flow from one to another.⁴³

Culture can be a piece of the added value of a product, or even the product itself, if "meaning" is primarily being consumed. In the context of cultural consumption, the same holds true for international tourism, a considerable piece of which is accounted for by the theme park industry.

According to which role the visitor/consumer takes on, different pictures of type and direction of cultural flow result. The passive consumers, who assume predetermined meanings, determine the concept of globalization-as-westernization. A relative autonomy speaks to the consumer, resulting in the act of consumption of a product, or an environment of acquisition, which represents a type of cultural production itself. This acquisition approach corresponds to the concept of globalization-as-hybridization.

2.5 Technical Innovation and Virtual Worlds

From the perspective of media and technology theory, theme parks can be characterized as a type of novel mass media, molded by its predecessors of film, television and theatre.

⁴⁴ Seen this way, one can agree with Marshall McLuhan; the content of a medium is always another medium--as, for example, the content of writing is language. A medium can, therefore, never be a neutral channel, because it always both forms and shapes communication rather than just transferring it. One can say that the medium is itself the message, given its formative role in communication.

In theme parks, imagination takes on a material form, where previously stage and/or film have used reduction, recombination, montage and plot to join completely different places with new fictional spaces. Similar to the "creative geography" of film, theme park designers translate the fictional and fantastical into the concrete material of countries and worlds which have a spatial and kinetic quality. "Disneyland is the Holy See of creative geography, the place where the ephemeral reality of the cinema is concretized into the stuff of the city."⁴⁵

Disneyland shares the aspect of fiction with motion pictures. While film represents the conceived world as a moving picture, these pictures are built within the theme park. The visitor is not only the viewer, but also a participant, and therefore also a piece of the comprehensive design, whose utopian character makes him location-independent.



Fig. 2.22 Pictures within a built environment

Film is a medium in which architecture is portrayed purposefully. The viewer sees only specific spaces or spatial areas and follows the course of the plot without being able to decide for himself which areas he can view. In contrast, the course of plot and movement within real architectural spaces can not be controlled, or only to a certain extent. If the objective is to only communicate certain spatial impressions, the user must be able to be systematically steered, not only in terms of his perception of reality, but also his plot, and comprehension of actions in his surroundings. This is how the Disney parks achieve an "animated architecture:" through on the one hand a precise direction of paths, and on the other a comprehensive design. Through the connection of the pieces to a plot line and the animation of the environment through costumed personnel, automatons and actors, an all-encompassing animated architecture is created, in which the visitor becomes a participant. Especially in the rides, the designers have the rare opportunity to invent spaces and perceptions through the previously described dramaturgy, just like a director of a film.

The medium of the theme park comprises variations of the theme "movement and space." The theme park stages simulated spaces, which cannot be experienced except through movement, sometimes literal, as in the Disney parks, in which a "people mover" transports visitors like a director along predetermined routes through the scenery of the attractions. Against this backdrop fittingly appears an expanded interpretation of his medial character, which, in addition to audio-visual arts and technologies, also incorporates means of transport. Artificial sensory worlds constitute themselves from the "cross over" of media and vehicles. According to Virilio, they embody a combination of audiovisual and automobile vehicles. Just as the classic amusement park sets the stage for physical impressions with its rides and the theme park developed itself into a stage for optical illusions, so do the virtual experience generators ready themselves to create electronic hallucinations for their visitors.

"Movement on site" is the official dispatch of artificial sensory worlds. Travel and arrival coincide, "going for a ride" appropriately summarizes this primacy of departure before arrival: visiting a theme or amusement park means arriving in order to depart.

Genesis of Technical Innovation

From the beginning the development of the leisure park has been closely related to contemporary technical trends and possibilities in general. Park engineers have always tried out the newest technological innovations and manipulated them into attractions. In the history of artificial sensory worlds there have been various phases, in which specific technologies were prevalent in their configuration within a park, and brought about the development of new types of parks.

In the golden age of amusement parks, which stretches from the end of the 19th century until the end of the 1920s, it was above all the transportation and building technology which influenced the construction of rides. Therefore, one could regard the amusement park as an adoption and extension of building and transportation technology.

The origin of rides and other mechanical systems can be found in the large world and

regional expositions, in which visitors are guided through the area through a transport system. At the beginning these systems served only to transport, but soon became attractions themselves.

Futurama, the General Motors building at the 1939 World's Fair, is a very telling example of an attraction of the time. Visitors sit in chairs in antechambers, in which they are told of what is to come, and are then guided through a bird's eye view of various models of the modern city. The end of the journey, a one-to-one model of a "real life" street corner of a futuristic city appears.

Tying in to Futurama is the "Phantom Manor," an elemental part of all of the Disney parks. Here, too, is a meticulously planned intersection of built architecture and animated stereoscopic images which the rider is driven past in a controlled ride.

The building of roller coasters may have initially benefitted from the beginning of the railroad, and later from steel-frame construction. With the development of electricity and through increasing electrification of cities, entertainment offerings became ever more diversified. Car races, for instance, are among these classic "rides." The technology of the modern, distinguished by rationality and functionality, experienced a break into the ironic: the cars of these amusement park "scream machines" drive in circles up and down, but go no where.

In the assimilation of existant technical methods and disciplines, the amusement park industry creates new and original technological forms. Primary among these was the Ferris wheel, introduced on the occasion of the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 and later copied in the Vienna Prater in 1896.

By 1910, almost every park around the world was equipped with a carousel, rollercoaster and Ferris wheel. ⁴⁶

Leisure parks are still in a way the byproduct of new means of transportation.

So-called "trolley parks" in the USA are a product of the idea of electric streetcar operators to also utilise their cars on the weekends.



Fig. 2.23 Rides - Disneyland's main attractions

The dedication of Disneyland in 1995 introduced many novelties, but at the same time continued to be a model of secondary usage; many attractions reference already medially produced characters and stories, yet restaged in new ways. The landscaping of the theme zones does not allow any view into the outside, so that visitors feel "like in a film," even when they don't see any. The activity within amusement parks is strongly influenced by the technically-driven world. Time is precisely defined and rationed so that every roller-coaster ride has exactly the same duration and everyone receives the exact same experience.

With respect to their attractiveness, virtual experience worlds view themselves as doubly exposed to competition. The classic theme parks with their scenic architecture and staging on one hand and the amusement parks with their technologically upgraded rollercoasters and other rides on the other hand. The symbiosis between the theme parks and the leisure parks serves as a laboratory of physical sensations, which serves as a stage to further develop staged realities. Seen this way, rollercoasters and the other attractions developed from them are now experiencing a renaissance, a second golden age, offering the human body ever-heightening experiences of speed and motion.

In the construction of ever more ambitious technical rides, 3D simulation effects are increasingly applied which, in other cases, comprise the content of the attraction. Rollercoasters and virtual reality embody technical networks, which consist of many technological genres--mechanical, electronic, and digital technologies--and lend an attraction a characteristic design.

Contrary to the prognoses of the 90s that virtual reality would develop into the norm of mass entertainment, today simulation and VR technologies are increasingly spreading through the leisure park industry not as independent attractions, but rather as design tools for the development of classic mechanical attractions.



Fig. 2.24 3D simulation

The application of different types of technologies in theme parks and other sensory worlds ultimately serve the enterprise of enhancement. The objective is to enable a previously impossible experience of speed through ever more daring rides, to use thematization to imitate places whose artificially realized degree of reality exceeds the experiential value of the original, or to create totally fictional worlds that are “hyperreal”⁴⁷ in appearance. Urban virtual reality theme parks have not been sweeping successes anywhere to date. At least in the area of sensory worlds, the victory of audiovisual vehicles over automobiles prophesied by Paul Virilio⁴⁸ has not yet happened.

In the early 1960s the technology of “animatronics” emerged in Disneyland. This was the creation of lifelike replicas of animals and people, which were equipped with voices and became animated through the hydraulic and pneumatic movement of their joints. The development of audio animatronic technology was decisively promoted by the commissioning of exhibitors by Walt Disney Production for the World’s Fair of 1964-65. The animated exhibits at the World’s Fair were subsequently brought to Disneyland as attractions. Nature experiences were not only simulated in the theme park, but increasingly intensified by scenery resembling Nature. A real crocodile in a zoo can dive out of the view of the visitor. The animated crocodile in Adventureland would not be permitted to do the same.⁴⁹

From this perspective the various types and generations of sensory worlds form a continuum of technological media and vehicles that can materialize in ever new attractions, without having to engage in a competition with dynamic vehicles such as the rollercoaster, the stationary simulator, or virtual reality worlds—a competition which has historically resulted in a clear winner or loser. The future does not necessarily belong to the virtual theme park, and the development of mobile vehicles is in no way impossible. If one looks back in history, no linear development is recognizable; new technologies peel away and push aside old ones. New and old technologies create much more complex arrangements with the objective of improving the quality of an experience of technical or natural surroundings through enhancement of visual, structural or physical parameters.



Fig. 2.25 Animatronic dinosaur

3. Globalization of Amusement

3.1 Society of Sensory Experience

The industrialized society characterized the “modus of confinement.” The possibilities of scientific and technical advancement were far from being exhausted. The content of life was to satisfy one’s basic needs and not be poor. The meaning of life oriented itself around “having,” one defined oneself by possessions, income and livelihood. With the technical and scientific advances at the beginning of the sixties and the increase in real income, the satisfaction of basic needs became a matter of fact. The meaning of life defined itself no longer by “having,” but rather by “being”-a living a meaningful life. Reality no longer regarded as something predetermined and unchangeable; rather, one again found oneself in a configurable reality.

Never before were people so doggedly driven to be well. Never before could the spontaneous desires of such a large section of the population be satisfied so quickly. How much the experience afterwards agitated the population becomes clear in the fact that 60% of traffic volume is accounted for by leisure time.

He, who does not have an interesting job, play a trendy sport, travel to the South Sea or complete wellness programs, and is not consumed by the multitudinous other seductions of the Fit-for-Fun offerings, is “out.”

Life, diagnosed by the cultural sociologist Gerhard Schulze, is increasingly dominated by phenomena of sensory experience. With the development of experience-based society, a new paradigm shift of “I” and “world” has emerged. The change from world-oriented subject to subject-oriented world marks the huge break in cultural history in the second half of the 20th century. Life has become an experiential project ¹. In the experience-oriented society, the central theme is no longer life-survival, but rather experience--the art of living. Nothing is impossible, everything can be thought and done. The modern individual no longer fits into the given world; he can choose his own world for himself and, in this way, is ever more reliant upon his taste.



Fig. 3.01 Super Market

The experience society is currently the most prevalent sociological model for this social reform. A central theme in this regard is the "aestheticizing of daily life." Gerhard Schulze no longer distinguishes people by class, which is formed by origin or profession, but rather he defines lifestyle milieus, which are based in various ways on self-actualization, pleasure and hedonism. ²

The mass search for the unique and uncommonplace in daily life has resulted in the development of a market where producers of experience and consumers of experience collide. This experience market is characterized by an explosion of offers, whose practical value is largely or exclusively exists in their experiential value. Behind the diversity of forms of experiential worlds, specified form schemata or mechanisms work as generators. One of these is theming-the motif-based creation of a milieu for worlds of commerce and leisure. In "themed environments" the separation of practical value of products from their symbolic meaning is taken to the extreme. They are pure images which have been reduced by the spirit of sensory commerce to the pure experience of consumption ³. Theme parks represent this phenomenon most clearly.

The success of the entire commerce, leisure and entertainment industry is due to the relatively large importance of experiences in our society. Quality of experience determines the production of space today.



Fig. 3.02 Mall of Amerika, Minnessota



"Experience your life."

The search for experiences has become one of our most important activities, a part of our daily work. The process of individualization is central, and the question, "Who am I?" is replaced with the question, "What do I want to be?" "What was different and until now remained different is one thing above all: a valid perception of the relationship between "I" and "world." In the old paradigm, the world was the constant on which the "I" had to orient itself. In the new paradigm this relationship has turned-if anything can be regarded as constant at all, it is the "I." (...) From a subject oriented around the world to a world oriented around a subject: this is the cultural historical break in the second half of the 20th century" ⁴. The experience of oneself has become the content of life. The individual tries to functionalize the collective so that it is optimized for personal purposes. He becomes a shaper of his own biography and manager of his own experiences. The self-chosen, flexible and changeable "script" removes the socially assigned role. "The composition of the self-chosen biography becomes a task of the individual, a project" ⁵. The experiences of the urban idler, as described by Walter Benjamin, are an important point of origin for understanding cultural individualization, and are seminal for the resulting spatial phenomena" ⁶.

The individual, who is his own manager of experiences, is alone responsible for success or failure in the search for happiness. However, not everyone is up to these requisites. The demands on individual self actualization have mutated into a model institutional expectations, to the point where they have partly lost their inner specific function ⁷.



Fig. 3.03 Map of Mall of America, Minnesota



Fig. 3.04 Ocean Dome, Japan

The center of thought is one's wishes in relation to wellbeing and fulfillment, which also comprises the entertainment, a focus that receives more attention today than ever before. The favorable conditions in which we live, as well as the abundance of goods--from staple foods to luxury items and services--allow people to concentrate their desires and needs on other factors and cultivate new expectations from their surroundings. Arthur Schopenhauer formulates this idea in his "Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life" ⁸ in the following way: "In propitious living conditions, the will remains without a clear objective and must act out in some type of experiential work, which, often enough, only leads to boredom. He is susceptible to all possible offers and schematizations of experience." ⁹

The boredom mentioned here opens the floodgates to the marketing strategies of corporations, whether vendors of clothing, services or cartoons, all of which pull the customer into a spell, connecting him to their company, if possible. The tempo of the production of constantly new ideas and products is faster than ever before, with which the employee must also keep up if he is to retain his job ¹⁰. A situation results in which everyone is forced to constantly keep themselves informed, to improve their skills, and to discover new things, whereby exertion is preprogrammed and the social-territorial bond diminishes or is lost. The loss of cultural and social roots can further result in an emotional emptiness, one which is counteracted by the diversions of the leisure and entertainment industries. In order to fulfill the need for missing identity, fictional situations and places are created in illusory worlds which become tied to consumption. The absence of place according to the definition of Marc Auge ¹¹ is confronted by the strategies for placemaking and identification.



Fig. 3.05 Times Square, New York

Through this development the demand for two factors emerges: entertainment and identity, both which demand fulfillment on the basis of the new significance of self and contentment. New industries arise whose one objective is to satisfy this quest for happiness, and in so doing, appeal to the largest possible spectrum of interests. Artificial worlds in the form of shopping malls, multiplexes, water parks and various theme parks are created, which embody "fun for the whole family" as well as drawing teenagers and individuals. They constitute a replacement function for urban spaces or vacation paradises, and create a distinct industry devoted to this theme. City and architecture should materialize this quest, functioning in both temporal and spatial parameters.

The main provider of these structures which cater to people's needs and pursuit of happiness originate in the private sector. This concept of planned experience was first exercised in the Modern period, through the assignment of only individual functions to spaces—namely, functions of entertainment. Experiences themselves become a product to be sold and supported by diverse consumer goods.

Non-Places and Entertainment-Worlds

Postmodern intellectuals like Umberto Eco or Jean Baudrillard ¹² celebrated artificial experiential worlds as places of inauthenticity. Other critics take a culturally pessimistic turn, accusing the simulacra of consumption and lamenting the decline of culture. The anthropologist Marc Auge ¹³ explains experiential worlds as the "non-places" of a "lonely individuality." His thesis concerns abstract products of modernity which produce no sociality, but only serve to deepen a further alienation between people.

Places themselves are determined by communication. A location becomes such a place when there are social preconditions and communication can take place. Places play a role in defining identity and permit (experiential) life within a story.

In order to fulfill these equivalencies, a place must be able to bring about an atmosphere in order to awaken an emotional relationship and identity. This emotionality can be posi-



Fig. 3.06 Toyota and Toys R Us buildings

tive as well as negative, but cannot simply not occur. A place's quality of experience distinguishes itself by socially constructed dialog in terms of communication and relationship. The individual story, the place's character, is continually called to mind by images, names and texts. It must be specific to be perceived as a place. This distinction takes place through obvious signals—a semiotic integrity.

Ford-like modernism allowed so-called “non-places” to emerge near established places. The attempt was to make the city as efficient as possible. Function separation and the inevitable fusion of function clusters by conveyance belts allowed places to lose their characteristic attributes. Through the creation of characterless “sites” for various purposes in lieu of typical places, urban and rural qualities were disregarded.

Marc Augé identifies this transformation from place to non-place. Bank foyers, airport hallways and freeways are identical everywhere. They lack individual characteristics. They are general, and their only task is to provide a space for the specifically intended function.

The overproduction of non-places and the simultaneous demand for urban and rural atmospheres led to the rise of a “location industry,”¹⁴ which recognized the market demand and furnished it with synthetic products. Fantasies and images of typical locational qualities are manipulated in these products. The place as a product is tailored to its consumers.



Fig. 3.07 Parking Lot in front of a Walmart, Paris, Kentucky



Fig. 3.08 Non Places, Airport New York and Parking Lot

The various parks and planned cities of the Disney corporation can be seen as a vanguard of a meanwhile substantial glut of artificial location imitations; it acknowledged people's demand for places with familiar qualities and served this demand by providing it with appropriate products. The instruments which are always used in the creation of a new place are, on the one hand, the thematization of well-known images, and on the other, simulation. Noticeably, a "localization" takes place, whereby everything (presentations and pictures of Venice, Paris, South Sea beaches, etc.) can occur everywhere (in Disneyland, shopping centers, etc.) at the same time.

For architecture, this means that the building no longer suffices on its own as an attraction; a need persists for atmospheres and spaces which trigger emotions, whereby it becomes necessary to cooperate with other professions. This shift should not be regarded as adversity, but rather as opportunity, one that opens new horizons for the further development of architecture and city planning.



Fig. 3.09 Horton Plaza, San Diego

3.2 Time-Space Compression

One of the central characteristics of the new leisure culture is the deferment of temporality and the accompanying intensification of instant experience. The time-space compression,¹⁵ which is representative of the postmodern method of perception, also plays a pivotal role in event-oriented culture. In turn, spatial plurality and compression of scenes are implicit in order to create the illusion of unlimited mobility. As mentioned (illustrated) in the second chapter, the methods of temporal compression and spatial contraction are very popular means of creating fantasy worlds.

A new understanding of time is also part of the crucial features of the crossover from industrial to postindustrial society.

Time has become a flexible good; the strict separation of work and leisure time is dissolving. Paradoxically, much more disposable time is available to the individual than ever before, but through the simultaneous acceleration of events, time becomes a scarce commodity in subjective experience. Supply exceeds potential demand many times over.



Fig. 3.10 Main Street under construction

Here the new communication technologies contribute considerably: the crop of images that we receive becomes ever faster, event flow in realtime is, to our perception, at least unfamiliar, and in most cases gruelling and slow.

This results in the ephemeral character of an event-oriented culture. Experiences are concentrated and collaged like images. Impatience and unattachment lead to the stipulation: "No experience should last longer than two hours."¹⁶ To experience and consume as much as possible in the shortest possible time is the motto.

At such an accelerated speed, events have no chance of becoming experience. "(...), in experience-oriented action, the expectations of a lack of time lag centers on the concurrent operational situation. One invests money, time and activity and expects the proceeds practically at once."¹⁷

A maximal economy of temporality and intensity is aspired to:

The highest mark of quality for experience-based culture is the value pair of "hopping and thrill." It is not only a question of the most possible in the shortest possible time, but also the most intense possible.

In its creative approach, Disney is geared toward cinematic experiences with which the recipient is familiar. The individual is integrated into the performance and sees it from the perspective of a participant. Each attraction is a segment of many minutes in a plot sequence between snacks, recovery breaks and advertisement.

To translate the usual speed into the architecture, strategies were borrowed from film production. Carefully planned scenes and arrangements alternate in a familiar dramaturgy. The communication of the narrative takes place on many levels of consciousness, ranging from emotion to intellect.



Fig. 3.11 Stages for the Indiana Jones Movie

3.3 Brandscapes and Experience-based Worlds

Originally created to increase consumption, today brands are a focus for many people, and serve to describe their emotional control and orientation system. The vacuum that was left when society disposed of its traditional organizational systems, families, homes and social cohesion is filled. Brand identity results from the gain of market products and is conveyed through advertisement.

Advertisement no longer only takes place on monitors, billboards or in print media, but nowadays also functions spatially, and aims for sensual experiences whose simulation is carried out in architecture. Marketing serves to generate various architectural strategies in which "real" worlds have an appearance of authenticity.¹⁸ The consumer experiences the market in his physical surroundings.

This newly created quality of brand experience is based on interaction in so-called "brand environments"-constructed brand worlds. These staged environments are accessible advertisement ambassadors, and mostly work through attractions to affect the internal, as well as through their appearance in the physical and medial world to affect the external. Thus architecture finds its way back to its central enterprises (the Eiffel Tower, cathedrals).



Fig. 3.12 BMW Worlds

In this way, architecture should not simply be the purveyor of a specific brand, or present the brand in specific ways. Rather, it should become a stage for the unfolding of a characteristic brand production which is eventually experienced by consumers. Accordingly, the desired appearance does not have to embody the desired image of the brand, but rather is merely not allowed to contradict it. In the construction of brand architecture, the image of the brand becomes experiential.

Exhibition booths and flagship stores are just as much brand architecture as Disneyland or the VW Autostadt. In addition to the brand representation on the stage of architecture, various brands confer the reputation of famous architects onto themselves, in the same way that this principle is applied in the endorsements of actors or athletes.

In the last few years, the brand-themed park has newly arisen in the discipline of brand architecture, a world which one does not enter to get to know a brand, but rather to allow himself to be exposed to offered attractions. The individual is solely interested in the experience. And along the way, in inconspicuous ways, he is confronted by brands, later remembering them in a favorable context. The pioneering role of individual car manufacturers is significant-for them a distinct brand awareness is important in order to be able to sell the same model to different customer groups.

Brand-themed worlds also distinguish themselves through their economy of traditional experiential parks. It is not necessary to directly self-finance through the sale of entrance tickets and souvenirs. The main task of the parks is marketing. The parks will be financed by the additional income generated by a solid brand identity. ¹⁹



Fig. 3.13 Flagshipstore Tod's



Fig. 3.14 Flagshipstore Cartier

The success of this concept-as embodied by the Autostadt in Wolfsburg-speaks for itself. VW no longer needed to pursue the recipients of its advertising; rather, these customers spend their leisure time in the Autostadt as a tourist destination. VW underlines an integrated image of itself, whereby togetherness and identification offer an alternative to religion.

The further development of the Autostadt, a self-contained, artificial construct, is the glass factory in downtown Dresden-again, constructed for VW. In order to market the corporation's first luxury class of cars, the final assembly of the vehicles is staged. The choice of location is meant to translate the image of the picturesque downtown of Dresden on to that of the brand. To this end, the factory is integrated into an extant urban structure and presents itself at the same level as the Dresden Zwinger Palace and the Church of Our Lady.

In this factory, not only are the final stages of the car's assembly realized by hand in order to underline its exclusivity, but routine philosophical presentations about Peter Sloterdijk are also offered. ²⁰ This, in turn, works splendidly for the desired image of the driver of the Phaeton, VW's the premium class car.

The factory seemingly mutated itself from Ford-like place of production to experiential themed location.

Other projects from other similarly well-known corporations also follow the concept of brand worlds and their conflation of experience and brand. This forces the question of whether these parks will, in ten years, still be able to convey the image of a brand, or whether the hype with the gloss of novelty will have faded by then?

A cloak of outmodedness lies over Disneyland, which was founded more than forty years ago and since then has only altered its architecture in insignificant ways. This "patina," however, is in this case conducive, and emphasizes the uniqueness of Disneyland.

Yet it is not the task of Disneyland to offer a platform to its brand, which in this respect differentiates it from the brand-themed experience parks.

In this field Nike does not aim for themed experience parks, but rather for urban interventions which provide the company with more flexibility in their interaction with the brand image. Because "Niketown" is smaller and architecturally less elaborate, the results are less spectacular. The concept, however, enables the company to perform everywhere and react to specific situations. Nike is not building a self-contained artificial world, but is supplementing and altering existing structures for the sake of its production. Niketown appears to represent the further development of the brand-themed park, already coming quite close to the brand-themed city. ²¹

Considering the trend of progressive globalization, the tendency toward unification of cities seems obvious. Nevertheless, a competition between cities is taking place, brought about by this globalization, prompting mayors and city leaders to delineate their respective cities from each other and emphasize them individually.

The city will be developed as a brand, in order to again superficially demarcate foundationally similar cities from each other, just the successful way in which VW conjures different brands from its basically similar models. The city itself becomes a consumable product.

In this way, the linear development is completed: from local business to localized flagship store, then on to the brand-themed experiential world, and finally to brand city.



Fig. 3.15 Nike in urban context

3.4 Theming

With so-called "theming," a method was developed which is reminiscent of the staging strategies of the landscaped garden parks of the past. Narrative elements and images are composed together to engender emotions in the visitor and to translate the experiential qualities of products into spatial sequences ²²

Thematization as a form of sensory experience strategy has become a worldwide trend which marks museums, leisure parks, shopping malls and city development projects in the tension between global homogenization and local differentiation. (In his book...), Mark Gottdiener follows the genesis of "themed environments." ²³ According to him, within the thematized worlds of leisure and commerce, the separation of a product's practical value from its symbolic meaning is taken to the extreme. They are pure images which reduce the commerce of sensual experience to the experience of consumption. Theme parks, and even Las Vegas, represent this phenomenon most conspicuously.

Las Vegas Boulevard assembles Paris, New York, Venice, Egypt, tropical paradises and the Wild West-all in concentrated forms as consumable simulations. Legoland presents its own product in a brand park-a microcosm for children in Denmark, England, Florida and Munich. Urban Entertainment Centers such as the Centro in Oberhausen or the Xscape in Milton Keynes, England are becoming ever more popular as staged productions of the inner city.

Universal Studios Filmparks are not only offered in Hollywood and Florida, but also in Spain and Japan as tourist destinations. In the Saudi Arabian Al-Hokair Land, among the thematized zones near Ameriland and Afriland, Euroland can also be found, complete with a reproduction of an English castle from the 16th century.



Fig. 3.16 Las Vegas Strip



Fig. 3.17 Themed Restaurants

According to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* ²⁴ the Saudi Arabian king wants to allow a construction firm belonging to the Bin Laden family to build a theme park in Mecca that features an integrated Twin Tower Hotel for pilgrims. The development of such experience worlds clearly indicates that every possible place on earth is reproduceable anywhere else as a consumable simulation.

The concept of the themed world overlaps with themed restaurants and themed hotels, and with the conflation of leisure and shopping, thematized leisure-shopping-experience-centers are emerging. Even urban development projects fall under the influence of the planning and development strategies that originate from theme parks.

As a method of production of artificial experience worlds, thematization has since left the theme park context from which it originated, and now transforms airplane, shopping malls, hotels, UECs, and even entire city districts and settlements. A method of composition is employed which consists of three elements. Thematization ties together stories with a method of their realization (simulators) and places them within an artificially simulated environment.

The theme-based strategy strives towards a specific image. Like talk shows, it endeavors to find its own identity, to differentiate itself from other leisure time activities. Multi-themed centers and complexes attempt to address as many various target groups as possible, of different sexes, ages, social classes and education levels.

In the respective themed areas, not only architectural scenery is reconstructed, but the rides, shows and event program are also customized. Workers are costumed and given specific roles. Gastronomy and merchandizing are tailored to the thematization. Atmospheres are staged through the interplay of show and spatial structure, light and material: no thematization without staging. ²⁵

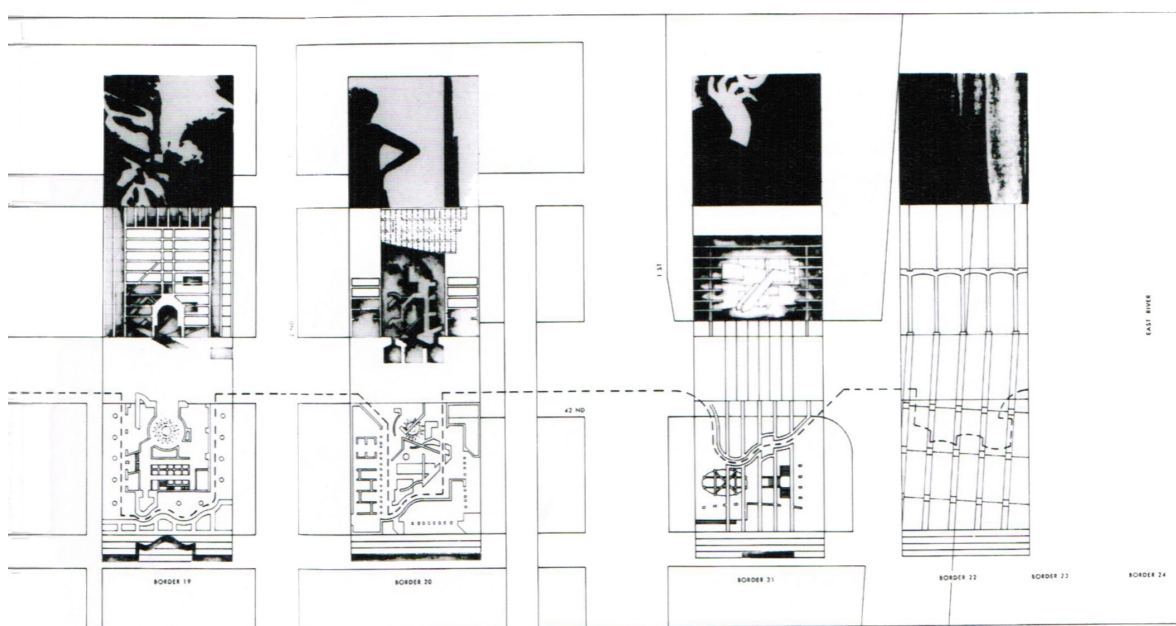


Fig. 3.18 Koolhaas Storyboard

Theming is used strategically today for certain projects, although it was always present in “architecture without architects”-whether in private abode or in urban space. Cultural critics defame “themed environments” as a symptom of the zeitgeist, just as architects lamented the decline of building culture. At the same time, the view of structural development of themed environments, in relation to their composition as well as the reception of such spaces, is that they are a cause to reflect and rethink.

Theming, appropriately used, opens options to architecture to break up the deficiency of symbolic orientation in the context of the all-encompassing cultural situation. Theming generates gateways to other cultural disciplines, which could lead to architectural space being more strongly integrated back into the general cultural scene.

Theming as a Tool

Theming is a tool of visual communication. As concerns architecture and urban development, it is a method of semantic programming of space through the application of a narrative. The term “theming” originates from the Greek/Latin “théma.” The etymological origin of the expression clearly indicates that theming is about a goal-oriented story and its application.

Theming is not a phenomenon limited to architecture. Theming is also to be found in other cultural areas. A tool always has the ability to solve a specific task or problem. In architecture and city planning, theming is a tool used in the solution of this task: simplification of readability in order to elevate a place’s identity. These days the power and pictorial language of the economy assume a strategic alliance with art and culture, and become a starting point for the consideration of image and space.²⁶ By means of sophisticated image strategies and the functionalized spaces for them, the medial and touristic view serves as a decisive contemporary method of perception, and it is this view which primarily enables the creation and marketing of “themed environments.”

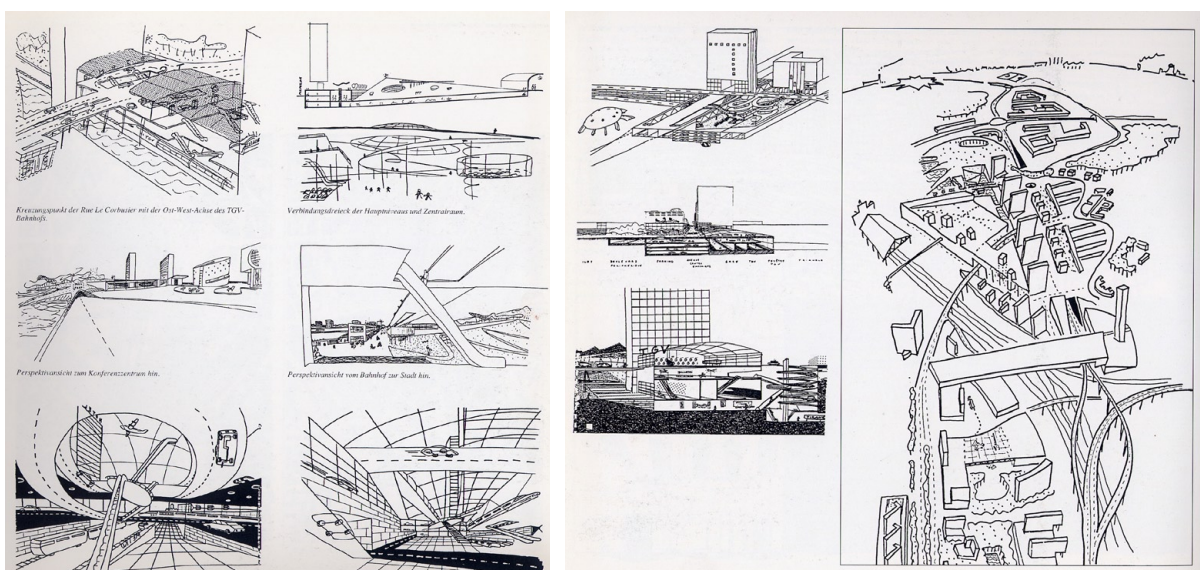


Fig. 3.19 Koolhaas Storyboards

Space, with the help of theming, becomes a product, whereby a value of a product can be communicated through space (VW Autostadt), and the spatially-communicated experience can itself represent the product (Disneyland). Consumer and leisure industries always offered room for an architectural genre, which, despite classically modern abstraction, still concerned itself with concrete stories as guidelines for spatial composition and communication of experience.

Walt Disney's architecture and its process of creation is the perfection of a commercial end in itself. Here, for the first time in this magnitude, stories are drawn upon as a starting point and link between reality and fiction and integrated into a model of urban development.

"Imagination is the model from which reality is created," Disney once said, showing that he knew exactly what he was doing when he turned fiction into fact, making myth and legend part of everyday life.²⁷ Disney's Locations are Spaces Translated from Cartoons. In this case, multimedially communicated stories are about social harmony, fairness, and fundamental moral values of American society.

Theming is implemented everywhere that space should become a medium of communication, or rather, where places without characteristics become the venue for a semantic program for the purpose of generating identity.²⁸

The model of "themed environments" is the American theme park of the 20th century, where imagery based upon narrative is developed into individual attractions. The experience is released to consumption in an artificial urban development model as a suggested alternative world.

The compositional methods of the Baroque can be regarded as a conceptual model of theming. As an ideal of the Baroque, the creation of a "universal total space" through architecture, sculpture and painting was considered a means of semantic programming. With the same techniques, by means of which the apotheosis of a ruler or the representation of a theological maxim was effected in the Baroque, are brands presented today.



Fig. 3.20 Baroque Garden versus Themed Hotel

English gardens from the end of the 18th century can likewise be seen as complex systems of visual communication. Today's parks follow certain parameters of historical horticulture, but differ in implementation and in perception of movement. In English landscape gardens, the focus of the staged view is pushed back to animals, special plants, statues, architectural miniatures or architectural references, and so-called "follies," which later receive the name "weenies" from Disney.

The beginning of a comprehensive leisure and commerce industry is highlighted by the amusement parks and large World's Fairs which have taken place since 1851. "In fact, thanks to technical possibilities and capitalistic production of goods, in the industrial culture of the 19th century, the belief in being able to erect a new earthly paradise developed. This notion found artistic expression from the glass palaces of the World's Fair to the shopping emporium."²⁹

Narrative Spatial Production Made by Disney

The phenomenon of Disney in the 20th century stands for fundamentally new aspects of theming: for the representation of mass media image production within a space. The products of the corporation are paradigmatic for the connection to cinematic perception, the production of images and narratives as models of identification, and their translation in a space as a professionalized method. The interface with moving pictures and the "end of the great narrative"³⁰ is what is new. Disney's refined narratives speak to the desires of the American society for social justice, harmony and an identifiable city image.



Fig. 3.21 Historical Photo, Main Street

The success story of the Disney corporation is also the success story of theming as a communicational tool and its use in the context of urban development. The Disney theme parks have taken over model functions from the city: "The architecture of this city is almost purely semiotic playing the game of grafted signification, theme-park building. Whether it represents generic historicity or generic modernity, such design is based in the same calculus as advertising, the idea of pure imageability (...)." ³¹ Whether theme park, shopping mall or inner city, Disney stands for a new and controversial understanding of the function of public space and a strategy for its production.

Already in 1963, the developed James Rouse recognized the potential of Walt Disney as a city planner: he identified the Disney theme parks as "the greatest piece of urban design in the United States today (...)". ³² Sharon Zukin describes Disney's approach with reference to city planning in this way:

"[Disneyland's] exhibits make social memory visible, and its means of establishing collective identity are based strictly upon the market.

1. Take a common thread of belief
2. Develop it into a visual image
3. Market this image as the city's symbol
4. Pick an area of the city that reflects this image
5. Put the area under private management. ³³

The models of identification offered by Disney parks are at the same time the narrative which is multimedially distributed by the films of the Disney Corporation. Zukin's conclusion is also valid here: "We participate in these narratives as consumers." ³⁴ Disney's success is based upon the integration of different media-the trusted narrative in the theme park or urban structures is only one link in the chain.

The model, meanwhile, is seized upon by many corporations and allows itself to be pursued even in the brandscapes of our cities.

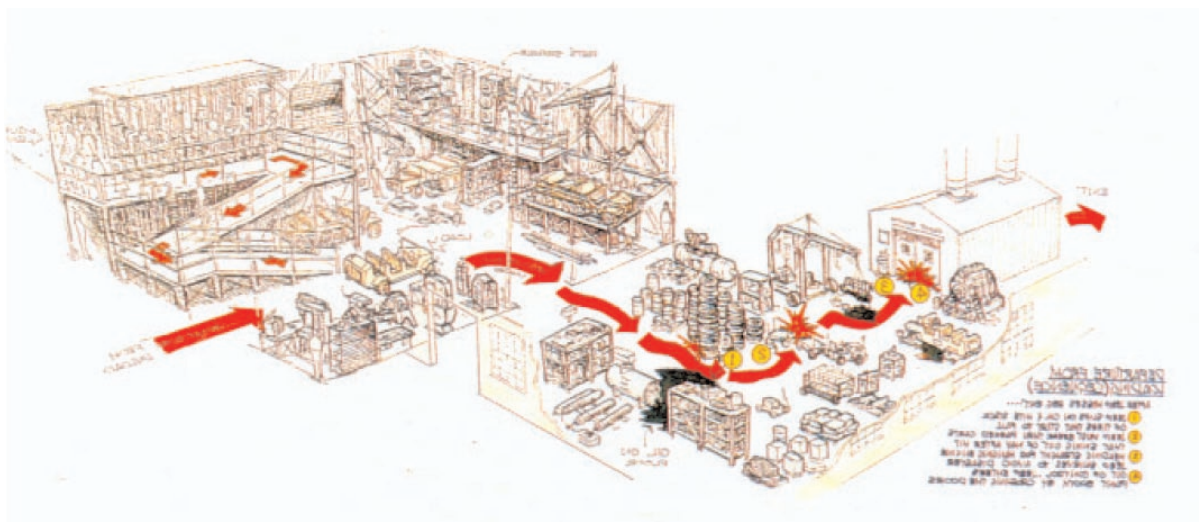


Fig. 3.22 Sketch for Disney Themeworld

Within the context of a lecture at the Second International Bauhaus Lecture Series, leading collaborator for the Disney corporation, Orrin Shively, introduced the method of operations of Disney's "Department of Imagineering" in the creation of parks and rides: The planning of an entire theme park, as well as the individual rides, begins with a brainstorming session. An interdisciplinary group playfully looks for an idea, a thematic jumpstart for the compositional task at hand. This jumpstart can be a film, a movie scene, a fantasy, an image, an event, or a vision: it must merely possess the preconditions for the formulation of its own narrative.

The next step is the development of a story from this idea. The story is the pivot and lynchpin of the entire enterprise, and is a principle of Disney's, to leave it open as long as possible. A further principle is the early preparation and communication of the story through pictures: Disney only operates visually so that all of their stories are recounted through storyboards.

At this point, the parallel development of the physical translation of the narrative structure begins in first mock-ups and three-dimensional visualizations. With the mock-ups, plot developments and adventure sequences are reviewed, which are further realized by more and more specialized work groups. In the process, there are three parallel working threads to be coordinated:



Fig. 3.23 Main Street Today

1. The evaluation and supervision of economic, administrative and legal parameters through the "Business Planning Department."
2. The accompanying research for customized and often innovative technical equipment and special effects through the "Department for Research and Development (R&D)."
3. The three-dimensional visualization to the smallest detail through the "Department for Design, Planning and Building." Here the work is highly based upon a division of labor--experts deal exclusively with their own topics. The production of a theme park, or sometimes even just one ride, lasts years and costs millions.

Each product is in keeping with a coherent corporate identity and is constantly evaluated on the basis of "Mickey's Ten Commandments," developed by Marty Sklar. The philosophy and concept strategy of Disney express themselves in these guidelines, which are the basis for the corporation's success--and at the same time, highly controversial for their totalitarian approach.

"Mickey's Ten Commandments:

1. Know your audience/ 2. Wear your guest's shoes/ 3. Create a weenie/ 4. Communicate with visual literacy/ 5. Organize the flow of people and ideas/ 6. Avoid overload/ 7. Tell one story at a time/ 8. Avoid contradictions--maintain identity/ 9. For every ounce of treatment provide a ton full of treat/ 10. Keep it up ³⁵



Fig. 3.24 Sketch for Disney Themeworld

Fundamentally, these specified work methods are used in the generation of all spatial products, whether one differentiates in detail between the assignment to design a single attraction, an entire park, or an urban structure such as Celebration. The various narratives which are drawn upon for the creation of the theme park arise from the fictive imagination of a collective--the American society. The task is the identification, refinement and spatializing of these imaginary worlds.

For this task, Disney supports forty-four "imagineering departments." Each of these institutes and procedural steps represents a piece of the production machinery:

"1. Blue Sky (interdisciplinary brainstorm) 2. Narrative and script 3. Business (money and estimation) 4. Builders (schedule and phasing) 5. Land use 6. Story development 7. Project management 8. Research and development 9. Dimensional design (model making, location of show elements) 10. Ride vehicle design 11. Sculpture 12. Show set design 13. Architecture (area development, facade exterior, building laws) 14. Engineering 15. Rockwork engineering (artificial rockwork) 16. Interior design 17. Show light design 18. Imaging and effects 19. Media design 20. Theme lighting design 21. Graphics and nomenclature 22. Costume design 23. Artificial foliage 24. Corporate approval 25. Coordination 26. Landscaping 27. Architectural ornamentation 28. Moulds and casting 29. Audio animations and fabrication 30. Figure finishing 31. Animation programming 32. Set production 33. Prop production 34. Vehicle production 35. Audio production 36. Film and video production 37. Field design supervision 38. Construction management 39. Rock work 40. Scenic production 41. Show installation 42. Show light installation 43. Show programming 44. Show quality standards." ³⁶



Fig. 3.25 Storyboard for Disney Ride

The design process at Disney is often wrongly characterized as interdisciplinary and creative. In fact, however, the progression of the design process is oriented more toward Ford-like assembly line production. For architects, there is no designated creative role. Designing is only an option anymore if one is an engineer, and only in small details. The largest part of creativity is intended for the cartoon artists, authors and designers.

It is interesting that these corporate strategies fit in perfectly with Henri Lefèbvres' analysis of the three levels of production of space.

(1) "Spatial practice" of a society in the generation and appropriation of space, (2) "Representation of space", (3) "Spaces of representation."³⁷

A society's "spaces of representation" play a central role in the relationship between ideology and space: "The subjective, lived, and perceived areas of action and the objective spatial structures conceived by science and technology are coordinated through the ideologies of space."³⁸ Disney's products take advantage of this conceptual trinity in terms of maximization of profit, delivering an important bone of contention for critics of corporate practice and the use of theming in general.

In Disney's theme parks, the telling of stories is assigned to space itself.



Fig. 3.26 Sketch for Disney Themeworld

4. Disneyfication of Architecture

The word "Disneyfizierung" is a fictional word which derives from the combination of the words "Disney" and the German term "Infizierung," meaning "infection." It describes the infiltration of the corporation in a variety of areas and is frequently used by critics to negatively reference the entertainment corporation's directed leisure and service company. "Disneyfizierung" is often applied in relation to the kitschy design and historicized, idealized production.

A further aspect of this expression is the thematization and artificial creation of environments as was realized in Disneyland in this form for the first time.

Disney made many architects and planners mindful that success pinged on appealing to people's needs and desires. In the time of belief in technology and advancement, the theme park was discovered as a test site for urban reality. Robert Venturi asserts that it is the "missing" architecture in Disney parks that so fascinates people. "Disney World approaches people's dreams closer than anything that architects had ever provided them. (...) It is a symbolic American utopia".¹

In their analyses, Zukin and Roost show that theme and leisure parks in the USA are promoted as consumption-oriented and idealized conceptions of city and public space and an accepted example of actual spaces.

For these people, Disney made the urban sensory world that had been lost since the fifties experienceable in his theme park as a vacation event. Today the Disney corporation still maintains the ability to rework this image of a city and produce actual cities according to this likeness".²

Both critics primarily criticize these urban development projects for their brushing aside of conflicts and the loss of real public spaces. An array of authors also denounce the rebuilding of the city, especially the downtown area, which above all is directed toward the wealthy middle class, resulting in people being reduced to tourists and consumers.

The leisure researcher Romeiß-Stracke stands seemingly alone in her approval of private control of urban spaces. She calls for the use of adventure park and mall models as guidelines for urban development and architecture, since they fulfill the desires of most people for security and cleanliness.

The event-driven new urbanism of the Disney corporation³ manifests itself in different fields of activity of the media corporation: the division of the Disney theme park, the division of the urban renewal concept of 42nd Street Redevelopment / Times Square NY, and the division of Celebration-a private city.

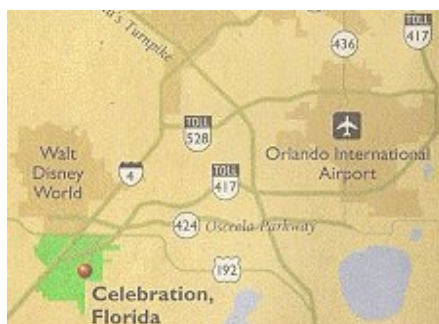


Fig. 4.01 Celebration, Florida



Fig. 4.02 Celebration - Concept drawing

4.1 City as Theme Park / Celebration

In November of 1996, the first piece of a settlement was put in place near the city of Orlando in central Florida; the settlement was erected by a subsidiary of the Walt Disney Company and carries the name "Celebration." Hollywood's leading corporate visionary commissioned star architects to build a utopian city which would be constructed on swampy waste land.

The settlement, prized by Disney CEO Michael Eisner as the prototype of the American city of the 21st century, resembles at first glance a small town of the 19th century and houses 20,000 inhabitants, who allow the entertainment corporation to organize their daily lives.

Walt Disney's Conservative Utopia

Disney planned the project EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow)--the city of the future--as a commonwealth, in which he wanted to control not only the habitation, but also the educational and cultural institutions and employment of the inhabitants. After his death, however, the project seemed to his successors too extensive, and dread of the massive responsibility led them to build instead a modest EPCOT-theme park. ⁴



Fig. 4.03 Celebration - plan



Fig. 4.04 Marketing-logo

But in the mid-eighties, the management of the Disney corporation reconsidered erecting a larger settlement on the company's own property in Orlando. Because of its proximity to two highways and a nature park, this land was not useable for tourist purposes. Since the economic development was also advanced and the settled areas already came up to the Disney property, the incentive to develop the land was increased.

Disney's investments have brought Orlando not only a booming tourism industry with 100,000 jobs in the region, but have also provided the city with a high name recognition and good image within the American economy. Upon this foundation, Orlando was able to reinforce itself as a place for many other industries. The defense industry plays a special role, which almost exclusively invests in regions like Orlando-areas without large ethnic conflicts and with predominantly white middle class populations.

In the last twenty years, the number of jobs has increased, whereby the number of inhabitants in the region of Orlando has tripled in the last twenty-five years. The constantly increasing demand for living space in and around greater Orlando which resulted from this population boom motivated the Walt Disney corporation to undertake the construction of long-considered projects within a new settlement on the company's own property at the beginning of the nineties.

Characteristics of the City

With Celebration, a new form of city planning was brought about which orients itself around the current state of technology, but whose appearance references the past. One can regard it as a ghetto of a different kind, one whose target audience is the white middle class with distinct security needs and an inclination towards nostalgia. The complete cityscape is thematized and relates to the ideal of the American small town of the twenties and thirties: an emblem representative of ideals, family and neighborly cohesion on a small, straightforward scale.

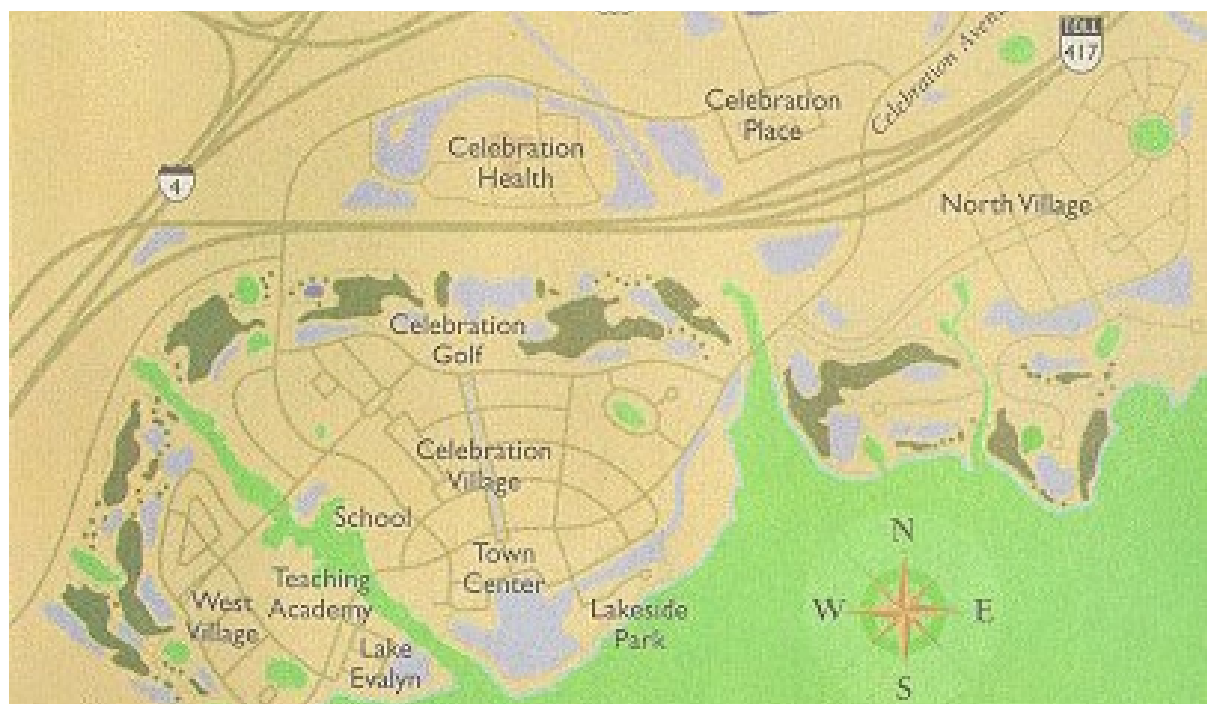


Fig. 4.05 Town structure

The project was configured and organized by private companies who consciously staged this theme because it offered such an antithesis to the typical American suburbs of the nineties. These suburbs were characterized by desolation between freeways, parking lots and shopping malls. By contrast, Celebration offered its inhabitants a downtown that visually cohered with the residences, complete with market street, city hall, bank, post office, movie theater and several businesses with accordingly various functions.

In order to present Celebration as an ideal, two frightening alternatives were created, namely the image of the threatening inner city, marked by crime, drugs and prostitution, and on the other side, the conception of the aforementioned American suburbs, consisting of a dismal sequence of freestanding one-family homes surrounded by a shopping mall, gas station, fast food restaurants and motels, whose access is singularly possible with the automobile. In this way, the Disney corporation fuels people's fears in order to achieve the highest possible profit for their project, and suggests that Celebration offers everything that is necessary to provide one's children with a safe environment and raise them in a beautiful neighborhood community.

It is worth noting that the city was not planned by a construction company, but by the subsidiary of a media corporation, one which wants to create the archetype of a new ideal.

The terms "neighborhood" and "community", which are anchored in the traditional American values system, are especially applicable here.

Celebration can be designated the first "copyright city" in the world, one which is staged in every aspect: visually as well as in its urban, public and political character, which is created solely by Disney employees, whereby there is neither parliament nor mayor.

While in the USA public order often no longer functions, in Celebration it is assured--even if it is by a private company. A perfect, though also artificial, world is created.⁵

The resulting impression is as if one is in an advertisement.



Fig. 4.06 "A perfect artificial world"

The Planning of Celebration

Walt Disney died in 1966, but his successors were driven to carry on with the project; it was completed in 1971. An agreement was reached with the state of Florida in the Reedy Creek Business Improvement District Contract, through which the corporation obtained the right to make decisions regarding the buildings, streets and layout of the structures on its own land, as well as levy its own taxes.

Since the opening of Disney World, through unprecedented rapid development, Orlando has become one of the most important tourist attractions in the world. Meanwhile, the greater Orlando area draws around 37 million tourists every year. This represents the success of American service industry, as well as the pleasurable sides of the American way of life.

In the planning of the new settlement, the Disney corporation deliberately took a stance against the prevalent schematic of an automobile-friendly, pedestrian-hostile sequence of one-family houses. Instead, CEO Michael Eisner decided to resurrect on the property Walt Disney's dream of a model city.⁶

Next, various planning and architectural firms were commissioned to develop ideas for the new settlement--among which were the architects Andres Duany and Elisabeth Plater-Zyberk, important practitioners of New Urbanism known for their efforts to launch neotraditional settlements whose master plans are based upon the spatial structure of an older, established small town. Eisner was very much taken with this idea, and accordingly commissioned the composition of this imagined master plan to the famous New York architects Robert A. M. Stern and Jacqueline Robertson, known for their historicizing, postmodern style. The close association between Eisner and Stern may have been a decisive factor in Stern being a member of the board of directors of the Walt Disney Corporation. Due to the Reedy Creek Improvement District Agreement, the Disney company had extensive rights and broad liberties in planning, none of which, however, was extended to the 20,000 new inhabitants. The property belonging to the corporation had the status of an independent political administration, one whose own electorate were Disney managers who chose themselves as government. But with the new citizens of Celebration, the Disney corporation did have to share this power with actual voters. For this reason, the Disney planners classified the Celebration property as outside of the agreement, instead accepting that they would now be subject to the regulations of the planning authorities of the appropriate district in Osceola County.

The area on which Celebration sits lies within the southern part of the company property and encompasses 2,000 hectares. The settlement will have another 20,000 inhabitants after its completion, for whom 8,000 living accommodations are being built. The first building in the downtown area, with 470 apartments, was finished at the end of 1996. A piece of the project area, however, was developed not as a living area, but as an advertising space, in which the Disney corporate administrative buildings stand, responsible for all of the activities relating to city planning.

Despite this, the ground plan of Celebration's downtown area differentiates itself considerably from an actual older town center, because the area inside the city blocks is almost completely occupied by giant parking lots. This is fitting, considering that upon its completion, Celebration was supposed to accommodate 20,000 inhabitants, for whom there is no public transportation provided of any kind.

The inhabitants have the option of co-deciding the layout of their house, but are required to assemble their house from individual elements which have been drawn from a sort of building blocks system.⁷

To this end, architect Raymond Gindroz of the Pittsburgh firm UDA developed a Celebration pattern book, in which the permissible usable elements are ordered in detail. The inhabitants must then choose one of the six possible historicized types, Classical, Victorian, Coastal, Mediterranean, French or Colonial Revival, and piece together their house from the example book.

The possible styles are modeled after well-preserved southern cities like Charleston or Savannah and the distinctive characteristics of the garden cities of Florida such as Coral Gables, the contribution of each style to the creation of the desired small town atmosphere being crucial.

The remarkable thing about Celebration is that with the help of a system of rules, uniformity and variety are interconnected-together they create a cohesive, romanticized city picture that, at the same time, simulates the slowly developed variety of an older city.

Even the pastel-colored apartment buildings designed by Stern and Robertson are consistent with an old "main street" in an historical Southern state.

The design for the colorful local bank in the center originates from Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown. The diminutive post office by Michael Graves with its entrance rotunda contrasts conspicuously, so that even in times of market leadership, private package delivery cannot be overlooked. By way of comparison, the cinema was designed by Cesar Pelli as "modern," and imitates the Art Deco style of the twenties. Finally, the town hall, an identifiable, discreetly historicized, but exuberantly columned building, was designed by the doyen of the Postmodern, Philip Johnson.

Celebration is a realized illusion, one which can be likened to the dream of the ideal city of the 19th century. The model of a garden city by Ebenezer Howard also orients itself around people's dreams, and is meant to impart its citizens with happiness, prosperity and health.

Permanence is a further ideal that Celebration has to embody, whereby its buildings should appear "timeless and styleless." This occurs through a mixture of various styles and from every possible era, which the buyer can choose for himself.

Rules

With as yet unique effort, the Celebration Company has tried to influence the social structure of the city. To this end, several behavioral regulations were put in place by Disney developers to which the inhabitants must adhere.

The most important rule is that the new residents are obligated to occupy the house for a minimum of nine months in the year. This is meant to prevent Celebration from sharing the fate of other neotraditional settlements in Florida, in which the desired urbanity was never perceptible because the inhabitants are only there a few weeks a year.

Furthermore, everything that could compromise the idyllic picture of Celebration is forbidden: for example, the enclosure of the veranda with glass. It is also not allowed to park cars needing repairs on the street, to allow gardens to become overgrown, or to hang laundry in the front yard. Even the type and maximum number of various plants in the front yard is regulated, as well as the color of the curtains, which must be white. Whoever breaches these regulations receives warnings from the Disney inspectors, who are also labeled as "Veranda Police."

To strengthen the special community feeling, a fiberoptic cable network allows all schools, apartments, workplaces, restaurants, shops and public structures to be connected to each other online.

The new residents can receive computers and cellphones donated by AT&T. In return, they must readily declare that all information regarding their manner of communication-length and purpose of calls, visited internet sites, number of sent and received emails, etc.-may be collected, recorded and evaluated by AT&T for marketing purposes.

The Disney management decided to found a special progressive school. In collaboration with noted educators, a concept was developed which comprises elements such as study groups which are not age-specific, and team work instead of the customary school classes, as well as progress reports rather than grades. This plan, however, caused some problems. For one thing, the underpaid teachers felt overwhelmed by the high standards. Also, those among the residents of Celebration who were raised in a conservative value system and naive belief in Disney's concern for tradition were dissatisfied. But the Disney company does not appear ready to compromise to such objections.

The residents who originally had a particular faith now criticize openly. Their behavior is not tolerated by the majority of the residents or the Disney management. Several of them dealt with the consequences and left the city. But even in their departure, they felt the power of the corporation, which offered them assistance in selling their house, but at the same time contractually forbid them from publicly speaking about their move in order to protect the good image of the city.

The daily life in Celebration is moulded by a comprehensive leisure time program. The health center, called "Celebration Health," not only ensures the medical care of the residents, but also provides a broad preventative program intended to make Celebration a "healthy community."

In Celebration, Disney pursued a seemingly contradictory policy, if one considers its other concepts. In no way does this city serve to market any of the Disney characters or products; it concerns itself much more with creating a practically advertisement-free zone, perhaps the only one in the USA. In this project, in which Disney holds sway and can create its so-called "own world," the corporation decided to present a world as it could have existed before Disney, creating an antithesis to the nearby theme park.

The Disney brand permeates the area even without directly advertising; the space itself becomes the product being sold.

This raises the question of how telling this form of urbanity is for the future.

"The notion seems obvious that Celebration and the idea of the brand city can simply be dismissed as a particularly neurotic obsession with Disney: no prohibitions of future privatization of public space, just Walt, who is playing God again from the grave! But since virtually every large brand takes Disney as an example, one should not brush off Celebration so quickly. Of course Disney is far ahead of its competitors-Disney invented the game-but, as always, there are many imitators trundling behind and taking notes" (No Logo, Naomi Klein).

In fact, Celebration can be regarded as a postmodern approach to a modern problem that will not be brought under control in the suburbs of the USA. An illusion of a nostalgic small town is conveyed to the residents, one that, in this form, probably never existed but still has a definite place in people's imaginations. The grievances of American city planning are not solved with such approaches, in which an ideal is transformed into a product, but rather, only covered up. Precisely this is also the point at which believability in such concepts can be called into question. It is a issue of staged places, in which residents close their eyes to reality and become extras in a picture of the perfect world.



Fig. 4.08 Correct appearance of the houses

CELEBRATION!
A super-modern Disney town with an old-time feel
By Felicia Levine

Celebration, The Walt Disney Co.'s residential town, is so pastel perfect it's almost surreal-- old-fashioned rocking chairs line a community lake where kids frolic in a fountain; a quaint ice-creamery and fudge shop provide access to a throwback movie house; expansive homes are built with oversized porches and verandas where neighbors actually talk.

It's as though it were run by the Wizard of Oz or something. Still, most nine-to-fivers would relinquish their pension plans to live in this perfectly manicured property, replete with chi-chi golf club, nine-acre park, tennis, volleyball, swimming pool, playground.... And that's just the start. *Continued*

© The Walt Disney Company
Celebration Place, an office park with proposed buildout totals of 1 million square feet.

Fig. 4.09 Celebration advertisement

New Urbanism

New Urbanism, conceived by American city planners, has presented an opposing concept to modern city planning since the beginning of the 1980s. Urban criticism is refocused on the modern concept of function separation, which dissipates the American city in “suburbia” and is responsible for both the empty downtowns at night and the neglected suburbs during the day, as well as the high cost of traffic over long commutes and the resulting pollution and high degree of land use. In the suburban spaces, social relationships collapse. So-called “urban sprawl” is held responsible for a trend of depression, misconduct, and escalating alcohol and drug consumption by youths.

New Urbanism means planned cities, and stands for concentrated, car-free (inner) cities instead of proliferation at the city limits (sprawl). The city plan orients itself around the historical archetype of the American small town. The individual is drawn upon for scale. Pedestrians have priority over automobiles. The city center should be reachable from the city limits in a few minutes by foot. The size of the city hits its limit at 10,000 inhabitants. Many compositional variables will be considered in the city’s configuration, like the battle against the collapse of society and the reawakening of the large American appreciation for solidarity.

The rearrangement of functions will be accelerated. City centers will be designed around public spaces and facilities and be made experiential. Affordable living space there will enliven the downtown. The routes which must be covered daily by inhabitants should generally be kept as short as possible. To bypass unavoidable longer routes, a well-equipped public transit system should be installed. A neighborhood should be able to cover all of the aspects of daily needs. A high degree of comfort should increase the social sense of solidarity in neighboring communities. In general, urban development takes precedence over architecture. The master plan presents the foundation. A continuative “urban code” sketches the rough rules of architecture.



Fig. 4.10 “Urban code”

Streets are always built in a strictly hierarchical system. Main and side streets differ from each other, squares mark social centers. This aesthetic, economic and social hierarchy differentiates New Urbanism from the suburbs of the postwar period, and is the precondition for social rearrangement.

Through the embedding of generous public facilities, private spaces will become more expensive because public areas must be financed by property owners. It is not odd that the movement appeals almost exclusively to the white middle class, and that the idea of social rearrangement often limits itself to different income levels of the middle class.

Various principles of New Urbanism are hugely popular with imitators who allow its original concepts to slip into the background. Thus have many "gated communities" come into existence in the last ten years, whose image is starkly oriented around the laws of New Urbanism. All the same, this type of settlement represents a restricted living or vacation area of the wealthy class, where the only access road is controlled by guards.

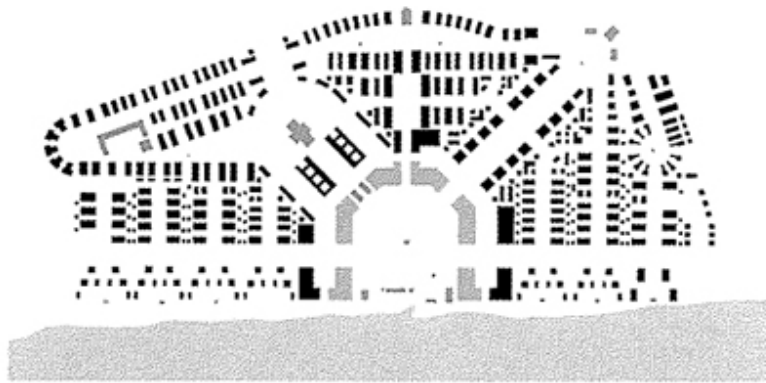


Fig. 4.11 Seaside, Florida

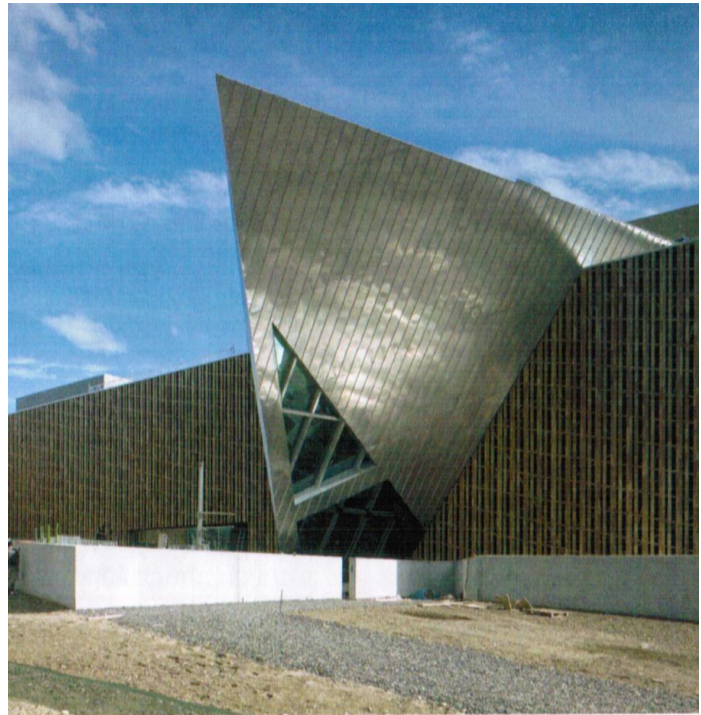
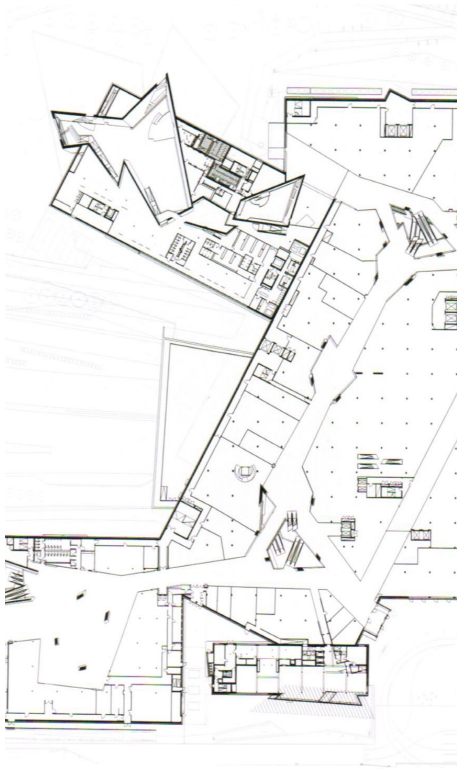


Fig. 4.12 Einkaufszentrum Migros, Bern, Liebeskind

4.2 Entertainment Architecture

In the following chapter, the effects of disneyfication on contemporary architecture will be demonstrated. The ways in which the characteristics and techniques of Disney's theme worlds impact the production of architecture as well as individual structures will be analyzed as a central issue.

Two examples-the Jewish Museum in Berlin and the VW Autostadt in Wolfsburg-will be discussed in detail, in order to illustrate the operational possibilities of techniques which were described in earlier chapters.

Cities, corporations and cultural establishments carry out a competition of pictures-a battle of brand images-in order to sell their products.⁸

In this way, architecture also becomes a commodity which, at its best, is sellable. Of course, the planning process and design methods also change themselves to this end.

Experience-based society realizes itself spatially and architecturally in experience-themed worlds. The most important characteristics are thematization, fictionalization and simulation. Space, architecture and house all relate stories. For the "homo eventicus," the Fordesque motto of "form follows function" is less relevant. It is replaced by "form follows emotion."⁹

In the Modern period, the tabula rasa was regarded as the optimal design premise upon which the ideal design could be developed through the best possible interplay of scheme, use and function. Elements which were regarded as representation, such as ornaments and the like, were rejected, whereby objects with clear lines and forms evolved, whose primary attention lay on function and its optimization.

The idea of the fine-tuning of function and functional sequences originated from industry, in which operational sequences were closely investigated and analyzed through the phenomenon of mass production. In the form of a conveyor belt, the most possible in the least possible time could be produced. The mechanisms of serial production were translated to construction. Architects committed themselves to "abstraction," as it was known in factory construction. Neither social needs nor compositional aspects were addressed, and as a result, functional buildings were generated whose facades reflected little individuality.

In the time after Modernism, a vacuum arose. Users did not want to identify with neutral structural shells.

In order to deal with the increasingly strong character of goods, architecture developed itself from a product of high culture into a product which served consumer culture.

Particularly fictionalized were those models which, due to their story--narrative potential--had a strong appeal and demanded attention. A narrative form of spatial and architectural production oriented toward Disney's strategies and the medial examples from film and television released space and architecture from functionalistic production.¹⁰

In addition to its functional duties, architecture also has emotional ones. Through a range of strategies normally used in film production such as long shots, close-ups and carefully planned sequences (as in the scenes of a film), superficial moods and atmospheres are communicated. The composition of distinctive places is a strong element of today's meaningful event-architecture.

The new design strategy apparent in entertainment architecture incorporates, among other things, theming, the branching off of atmospheres and schemes, and storyboarding. ¹¹ One identity-determining factor for architecture is certainly the occasional use of images and perceptions which are recognized and expected from postcards and their ilk. In these displays, ideals are produced which are only partially in accordance with reality. This technique appears to be made of theming, since through assessment of demand, precisely these idealized images are created in the blueprints, whereby space itself becomes a consumable commodity.

The influence of theming on projects, however, does not just limit itself to the outer appearance; it is much more about the complete, prearranged concept, in which the spatial structure, spatial sequence and the inherent compositional elements have been precisely predetermined, whereby the ambiance also becomes a design element. The diversity in which these artificial worlds can emerge is enormous, as illustrated by the example of Disney parks--how spaces relate stories, though the actual objective is to create a diversity of situations to entertain the customer.

The mix of functions alone does not make for quality of entertainment architecture, since the individual desires not only the functions themselves but also the environment in which he is embedded. There is instead the demand for a possibility for social interactions, whereby theming comes into play and exercises direct influence upon the purely functional aspects. Scenic spatial sequences are developed corresponding to the chosen theme, which provides certain compositional rules. The rational functions like shopping, gastronomy and entertainment are brought together into a scenic spatial sequence, whereby spaces and atmospheres are created which correspond to the theme.



Fig. 4.12 Mickey- and Minniemouse in front of Cinderella-Castle - medial examples from film and tv

In blueprints alone, atmospheres can only be partially presented, if at all; for this reason it is necessary to use techniques, like those of storyboards, which are primarily drawn upon in the conceptualizing of films and the like. With storyboards, it becomes possible to visualize spatial sequences and impressions in order to develop a design based upon them. In architecture, this medium is hardly utilized, and if it is, then mostly as an analysis tool or as a description for an already developed space. The storyboard as a tool for design determination is largely new to architecture. Through the representation of images which bring together the respectively considered aspects of function, composition and atmosphere, a space can be developed and revised. Because, as opposed to mockups and blueprints, more and, more importantly, different information can be introduced, the charisma of a space, the possibilities for social activities and even time sequences can be conceptualized.

The sequences developed can then be combined with and superimposed upon each other, and in this way brought together to create a whole. Spaces are generated with differing concentrations and offerings, so that the visitor can choose how he wants to spend his time and at all times can access one area from another, so that a faster change in situation is possible, similar to channel surfing.

The role of the site is relatively passive in concepts of this type, since they are less responsive to the surrounding landscape or the urban development situation. An autonomous artificial world is created anyway, one which can be found all over the world. The most important aspect that the building site must fulfill is a well-functioning transit system, so that a problem-free local public infrastructure is possible (most of the time with individual traffic in mind). Further urban development considerations are how the structure will sit on the plot, how large it is and how the construction volume appears. But the main focus of attention is the aforementioned spatial structure of building's interior.

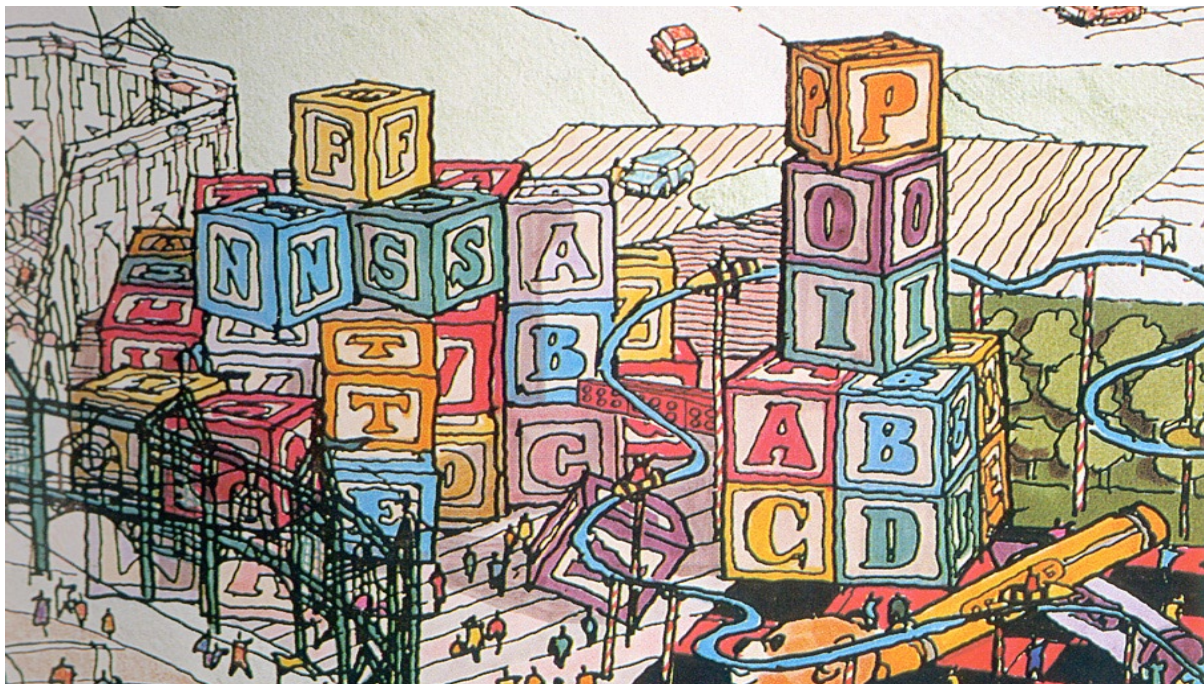


Fig. 4.13 NASU Highland Park - Storyboard

A typical purveyor of this event-oriented architecture is Jon Jerde, who effortlessly succeeds in connecting technical innovations, public transit systems, entertainment and landscape into his architecture. His design methodology is similar to that of the Disney imaginers. The commercial success of his architecture lies in the painstaking choreography of the controlled experiences which affect the viewers and users.

In her article, "Ten Strategies to Revitalize the City,"¹² Stephanie Smith describes the design principles in the form of analogies, which is how she presents these ten commandments. The formulations have a regulatory and all-knowing character, as if they were laws cast in stone and handed down from a higher power. Phrases with mandatory undertones, such as, "create an entity out of the ruined pieces of the formerly coherent city," are distinctive to the formulation and occur often. In general, all of these commandments address the fact that out of the contradictory situation of a city, a single entity must be created, whereby a cogent mechanism emerges. They each address a theme which is subordinated by a concept, such as, "Metaphor: Unity, Typology: The Urban Town, Use: Urban Magnet, City Development Strategy: Formative Element, Context: At Ground Level on the 40th Floor, Compositional Strategy: Experience Rather than Object, Infrastructure: 'Armature,' Inspiration: Organics, Innovation: A Mixture of Architecture, City Planning and Nature, and Product: Vehicles for Society." Through these concepts, her principles are further explained.

It is about creating attractive situations which have a magnetic affect, stand in context with others, and allow alterations, so that an individual development is possible in order to recognize and utilize situations and be responsive to context. The individual should not feel like an observer, but rather like a participant. Functions should be mixed, so that borders between city planning, architecture, and nature disappear, and a cooperation can be built between already existent factors of the past.

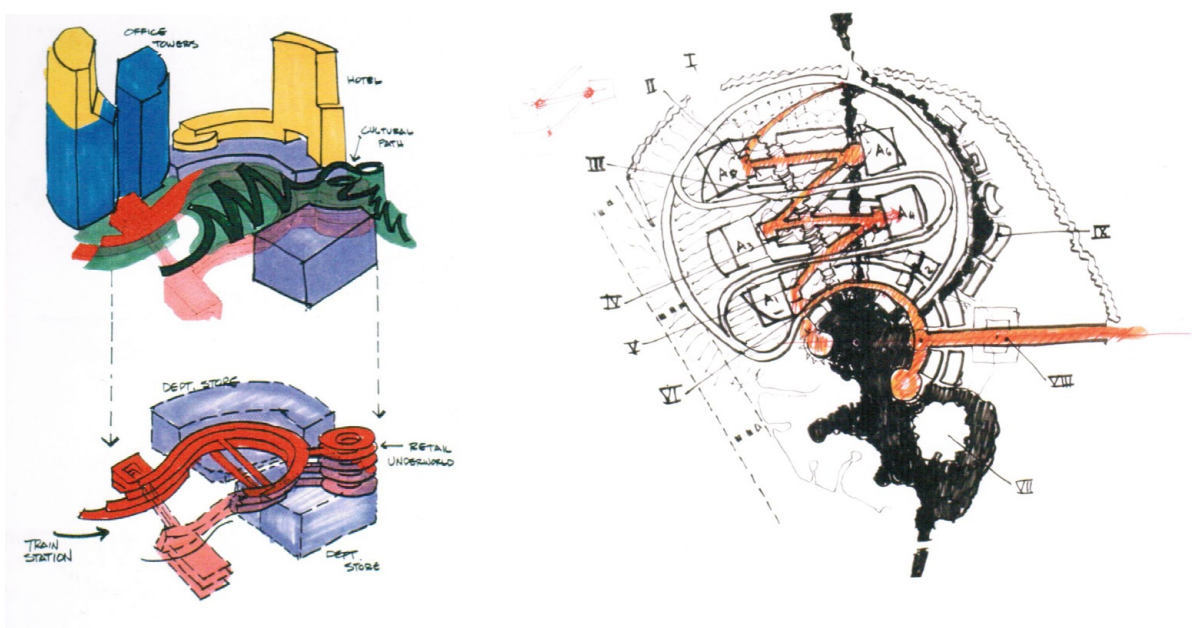


Fig. 4.15 Sketches John Jerde



Fig. 4.14 Eisenman - Highrise



Fig. 4.15 Yumthor - Therme Vals



Fig. 4.16 Koolhaas - Casa Musica



Fig. 4.17 Graves - St. Coletta School



Fig. 4.18 Jerde - Citywalk LA



Fig. 4.19 Tschumi - Parc de la Villette

Michael Graves is the entertainment architect par excellence, having translated Disney's world of imagery seamlessly into architecture. ¹³

In these architectural forms of mass consumption, entertainment value is more important than nutritive value. The bottom line is the fun factor.

The area of entertainment architecture has grown, and doesn't just represent buildings of marginal architectural value. Even architects like Rem Koolhaas and Bernard Tschumi play an important role in the event-architecture league. Tschumi described his project of the international airport, Kansai, in Japan in this way: "(...) an experience, a spectacle, a new city of exchange and meeting of economy, trade and culture which reinvents itself anew twenty-four hours a day, round the clock". ¹⁴

Another phenomenon which can be found in most branches of economic activity--the economy of awareness--strongly leaves its mark in architecture as well.

Society of today is shaped by mass media, through that which excites the attention of the public and creates icons.

The need for popularity and awareness has become larger than the product itself, whereby the main focus of marketing is awareness itself. Along with the orientation of experiences goes a strong increase in the meaning of imagery as compared to text.

Through diverse shopping malls and themed environments, a media aesthetic inconspicuously found access into architecture, without the use of technical media in architectural production.

According to Peter Eisenman, since daily efficiency and economy have stepped into the background, architecture has become a weak medium, and in order to remain present in society, must effect an emotion. ¹⁵

Through his architecture he creates spaces which cause sensations because they shock and unsettle. He creates spaces which, until now, have only been seen in film, and he plays with constraints like stability and the relationship between inside and outside space. However, these structures do not exist in the real world, but rather in an electronic space, which he uses to create the greatest possible distance between the familiar and the self-evident. Through these techniques, he forces the power of media to reveal itself. For this reason, his architecture also fails precisely when it does not excite enough attention and seems overextended and overblown.

Other trends make their references of the past the subject of irony.

The commonality of the postmodern style was the renunciation of abstraction and a limited notion of function. The postmodern made the jargon of construction acceptable for advertising purposes. ¹⁶

While one movement was configured to gain battle-won copious attention by approximating the vocabulary of an everyday culture according to the example of Las Vegas, the other made itself useful in the form and content of the publicly-oriented service industry.

Frank Gehry is a good example of an architect who avails himself of the media world of imagery in the mass-media battle for recognition. He captures an atypical attitude, in which he is able to be popular without degenerating into populism. He maximizes the surprise factor and cultivates courtesy.

The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao is an example of a structure with self-enhancing presence, whose main function, even above that of the museum, is to be a magnet for worldwide contemplation. A new perception of functionalism results, with public awareness as its center--something the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao has succeeded in achieving. To a certain extent, it even outperforms the actual purpose in which it has become an icon, one which competes in tourism advertisement with flamenco and bullfighting.¹⁷

The structure as a media star is the coronation of entertainment architecture and at the same time epitome of a functionalism of the industrial variety, in that the observational opulence becomes more important than the material good itself.

In this sense, architecture has the task of constituting the image of an organization, to represent a corporate identity and to create an emblem for a corporation. It is important, in doing so, to speak to the right target group.

The spectrum of entertainment architecture is multi-layered and stretches from the populist approach of Disney architecture to more eccentric departures.

Peter Eisenman and Daniel Liebeskind, for example, only assign value to educated and compositionally challenging aspects. Using their style, deconstructivism, one of their strategies is to achieve the right aspects by demonstrative deterrence from the wrong ones. The deconstruction succeeds in generating mass sensation for the artwork, without currying favor with the masses--something which certainly only worked for one historical moment.

Due to the new technologies, an increasing availability of architectural media results, whereby a conventionalization of deconstructivist vocabulary becomes noticeable.



Fig. 4.20 Frank Gehry Guggenheim-Museum Bilbao

The economizing of awareness is a phenomenon which can be found across the globe, from Berlin to Dubai. This awareness, however, requires an antithesis of conscious existence, tranquility, self-actualization and self-awareness.

This need also reveals itself in an architectural movement whose geographical focus lies in Switzerland. Architects like Roger Diener or Peter Zumthor create an architecture that has a meditative character and becomes noticeable through a very unique type of aura. This tendency does not have the same significance in public as that of increased awareness. It also does not represent the simple continuation of modern architecture. It avoids the insistence upon objectivization.

Although it concerns two completely stylistically and technically different movements, it unites the ambition to create an aura and to impart spaces with characteristics which trigger emotions in the observer.

Economy of Awareness

Jewish Museum / Berlin

Architect: Daniel Libeskind

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the following section will use examples to analyze how the starting point of the design process, which typically consists of the elements of context, agenda, function and form, has changed. The user's subjective perception/reception of a structure has gained importance, and next to the aforementioned starting points, has become an important part of the design process. The methods and strategies used in the production of thematized "landscapes" will also be discussed.

In 1989, Daniel Libeskind won first prize in an architectural competition with his design for the expansion of the Berlin Museum. The Jewish Museum was to research Jewish life and cultural history in Berlin and throughout Germany, and to house a permanent exhibition on the theme of Judaism.



Fig. 4.21 Daniel Libeskind - Jüdisches Museum Berlin

The appearance of the museum distinguishes itself through its incisive shape, through which it demonstratively sets itself apart from its surroundings. The structure represents the shape of a lightning bolt, whose form is defined by an imaginary network of lines of the addresses of both known and unknown former Jewish residents of Berlin, which is transected by a four-meter-wide linear slope only observable in the several empty spaces where it intersects the zig-zag line. The building reaches a height of four stories.

The reference points through which the lightning bolt is given its shape are in no way cogent, whereby this building could also stand in any other location, and one can object to a certain arbitrariness.

The facade discloses nothing about the structure of the interior, and is structured from seemingly random rows of windows, which are also produced by the addresses.

The narrative character of the architecture is persistent throughout. The building, conceived as a walk-through sculpture, became itself the representation of Jewish history.

The museum allows for different interpretations according to formation and perception of the observer, which range from an extraordinary structure to comparisons with the writings of Walter Benjamin or the music of Arnold Schönberg. The intention of Daniel Libeskind was to establish the structure as a means of communication that should address all strata of the population. The architect developed not only a structure, but also chains of associations for the observer, whereby the design gains a narrative component and can be designated as "themed environment." This project is in no way consistent with the conventional aesthetic of a themed environment as it is known from various amusement parks, yet narrative elements can be discovered in this type of architecture-elements which make the building into more than a casing for exhibitions. Theming as a method can use different imagery language; it does not lend itself to aesthetic characterization.



Fig. 4.22 "Dance, Sound and Leakage" - narrative architecture by Daniel Libeskind



Fig. 4.23 JŠdisches Museum Berlin

The clearly narrative conception of space, the manipulative strategies which the architect applies, are clear and visible in passing through the building. An opening is reached through a descent into a windowless basement divided into three thematic areas: "annihilation," "emigration," and "continuity," which can be perceived in the form of a path, inserting the representation of a time component. This end of the path, which stops before a white wall, is demonstrated through a set of stairs into the upper floor, whose layout contrasts greatly with that of the lower floor. There, the story of continual existence is thematized with the support of atmospheres evoked through angled walls, effectively rolling and slanting floors, sharp corners, distortions of perception, labyrinthine corridors, temperature, and targeted introduction of light, all bringing about a continuous interplay of anxiety and relaxation. The visitor is constantly exposed to a concentration of sensual stimuli in order to reach him in multi-sensory and emotional ways.

These types of staging have their beginnings in the thematized experience worlds, as is shown in the second and third chapters, and whose purpose is to create a better reality in the form of an illusory world.

Architecture itself relates stories and creates emotions.

However, the museum does not harbor a paradise-like ideal world, and also does not place itself in the service of a simple story. Liebeskind is too good an architect for that.

Much more, the building is a projection screen for many exhibitions of stories and overall atmospheric impressions.

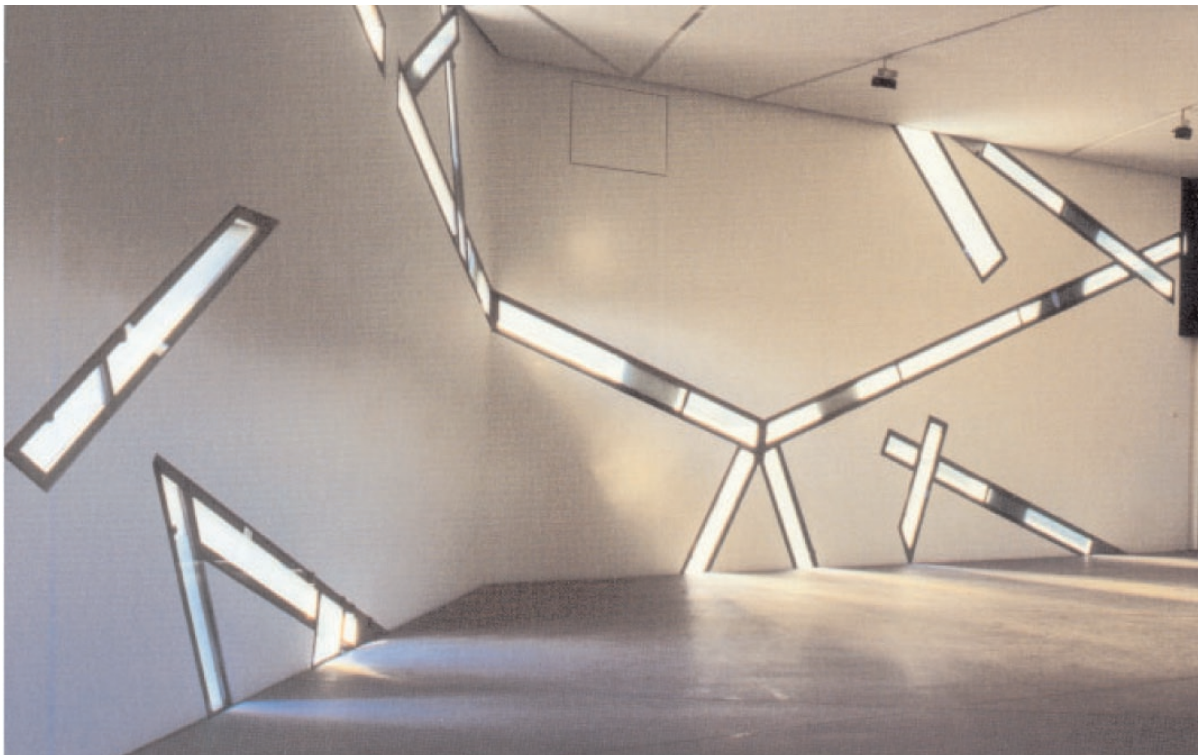


Fig. 4.24 Overall atmospheric impressions

The architect entitled the design "Between the Lines." The structure—a destroyed Star of David, or more specifically, a lightning strike—opens the first story, which is to be read from inside as well as outside. The text communicates the history of the Berlin Jews, recounting their lives and demise in the Holocaust. For the basic shape of the Jewish Museum—the jagged line, or rather, lightning bolt—the source of inspiration were the addresses of the Jews deported from Berlin. Correspondingly, they produced on the city map a jagged Star of David—the symbol of Jewish identity and exclusion in National Socialism. The lightning bolt—an established commemorative metaphor—stands on one hand for catastrophe and neglect, and on the other hand for remembrance and renewal, as it awakens new life

like a lightning bolt into the past.

In the facade, a network of addresses and contacts of Jewish inhabitants of Berlin are represented in the form of linear windows which offer a sort of map. Through different lengths and intersections of these lines, the temporal progression of different lives with different events is denoted, whereby diverse interplays of light and shadow are generated within the interior space.

The five open spaces that transect the building are a further symbol, and are meant to communicate the feeling of emptiness. These represent the absence of a Jewish population in Germany and radical break in history, which structural measures make experienceable for the visitor. The voids are empty spaces which are not heated or air conditioned, and are arranged along an imaginary connecting line. They are largely without artificial light, and clearly detached from the rest of the building. Their walls are naked cement. In the upper floors of the exhibition, they are clearly visible through the void bridges and marked with outer walls which have been painted black. One of the five empty spaces houses the installation "Shalechet," or "Fallen Leaves," by the Israeli artist Menashe Kadishman.

The museum's empty spaces show that which is no longer representable, that which has been lost through the destruction of Jewish life in Europe. They make this loss visible and tangible. Sensual perception occurs through the sensation of cold, darkness, silence, color, touch and through the spatial sensation of a dramatically proportioned room.



Fig. 4.25 "Void"



Fig. 4.26 Stairs

There is "the 'Axis of Continuity,' an axis which leads the visitor away through all of these injuries and devastating upheavals in order to preserve that basic bond which is called Berlin".¹⁸

One axis serves as the main thoroughfare of the exhibition area, the second leads away to the E.T.A. Hoffmann Garden, and the third ends at the Holocaust Tower. They symbolize three historical truths of the history of Jewish Germans, and do away with pure functionality through a sensible spatial installation. The lower floor, through which the museum is accessed, is constructed in the shape of a tunnel, whose purpose is to evoke within the visitor a feeling of anxiety through the limitation of maneuverable space. This motif is implemented in several films in order to generate tension.

The museum's tunnels intersect each other in many places. These intersections are meant to be interpreted as a union of the contradictions of heaven and earth.

A further element is the "Garden of Exile," or "E.T.A. Hoffmann Garden," which references the Jewish diaspora and is a symbol for the rapture of the End of Days, longed for by Jewish exiles. In the Garden of Exile, uncertainty is not induced through the lack of light or the claustrophobic corners, but through the confusion of equilibrium. "The Garden of Exile stands for the attempt to completely disorient the visitor, for a shipwreck of history"¹⁹ After departing from the axes to the Garden of Exile, forty-nine concrete columns rise on a quadratic plot. The whole garden enclosure is raked at a twelve degree angle and confuses the sensual perception of the visitors. This spatial experience should refer to the feeling of instability and the lack of orientation which emigrants felt who were displaced from Germany. From these columns grow oleasters, which symbolize hope. The visitor becomes a protagonist and should assume the role of the exile on an emotional level.

"The Holocaust Tower is that space which, in a way, ends the story".²⁰ It is a memorial room, which recalls with its nakedness and emptiness the many Jewish victims of the mass murder. The space is narrow and high, and is subject to a similar spatial conception the void, whereby the tower is the only freestanding void outside of the museum structure.



Fig. 4.27 The Garden of Exile



Fig. 4.28 Inside the Garden of Exile

Even if a political issue is addressed in this project, one can still speak of it as a “themed environment.” The sculptural appearance of the building becomes a piece of the narrative, assembled from architecture and exhibitions. Unfortunately, certain discrepancies arise between the exhibition concept, pieces exhibited, and the architectural space, and one can justifiably wish that the architect and the exhibition coordinator had better agreed upon the concept.

In museum circles, a certain Disneyphobia has developed. Yet upon consideration of today’s museums and exhibition concepts, one realizes that for years they have used immersive strategies, which nevertheless do not necessarily result in the exhibitions’ total loss of identity. In the case of the Jewish Museum, general atmospheric impressions are created through the means already discussed, whereby the museum itself becomes a projection screen for associations and emotions, an illusory space in service of the object being exhibited. The question is also raised, however, whether a structure should be left simply as a structure, without being filled with exhibits, since it has clearly taken no consideration of object presentation.

In this project, the architect further developed his role and created a building where the feelings and associations of the visitor are minutely planned and predetermined. The chosen strategy is, in certain terms, manipulation, as Liebeskind admits himself.



Fig. 4.29 Jüdisches Museum Berlin, Facade

Narrative Space Production

Autostadt Wolfsburg

The second example is not part of high culture, but rather, concerns a brand-specific experiential themed space--a sort of corporate theme park. The brand-themed park is not a building, but resembles a leisure park where one would travel for amusement and adventure.

The Autostadt--the theme park belonging to the Volkswagen corporation--is actually a Corporate Image Center whose concept is not to achieve profit margins through entrance tickets or the sale of souvenirs, but rather to offer the visitor a pleasant experience which he will continue to associate with the brand. ²¹

The park represents a synthetic structure ²² in the middle of the real automobile producing city of Wolfsburg, which is itself a satellite town founded around the VW factory in the province of Lower Saxony. The character of the planned city is obvious and manifests itself in the dearth of established ambiance, monotonous aesthetic, and, not lastly, the 125,000-inhabitant city's economic dependence upon a single corporation.

On July 1st, 2000, simultaneous with the opening of the World's Fair in nearby Hannover, VW also opened its theme park, which represents, among other things, part of the company's internal plan for reduction of the increasing unemployment in the region. The architect and master planner of this project was Gunter Henn, who at that point had already realized many structures for owners with a close relationship with Volkswagen AG. For architects, a commission like this presupposes a strong and intensive collaboration with the company's marketing and production departments. ²³

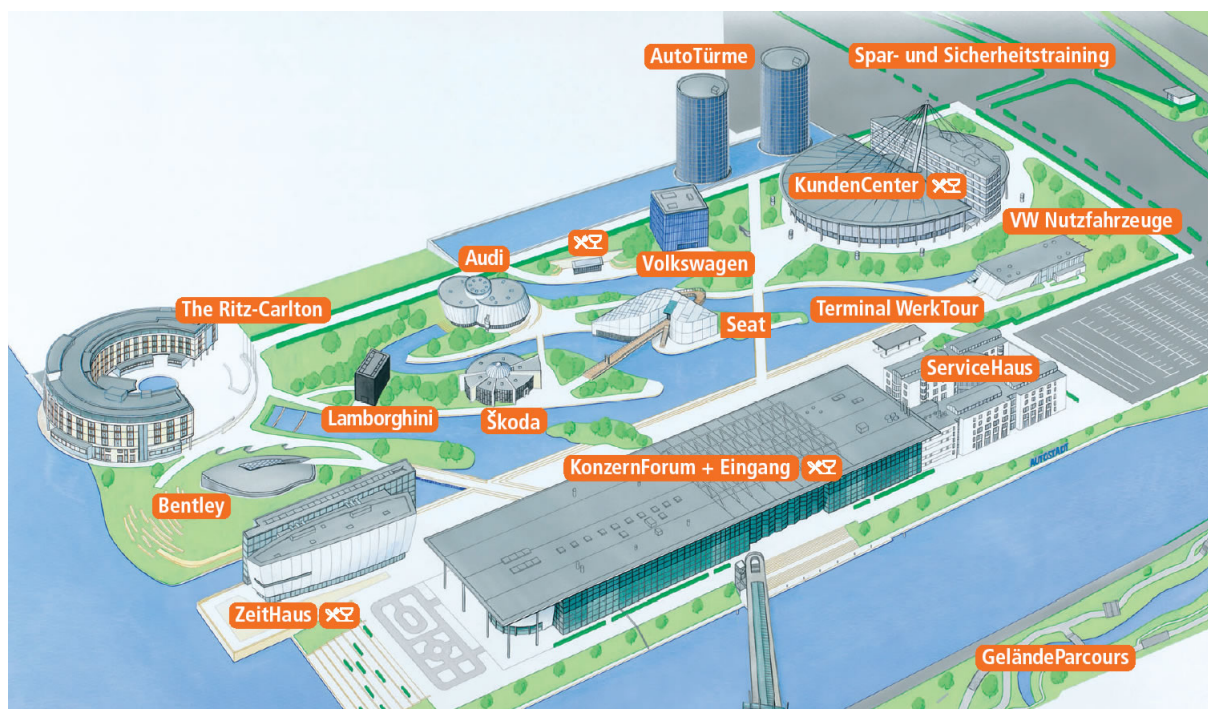


Fig. 4.30 Autostadt Wolfsburg - map

For 850 million deutschmarks, a lagoon landscape with leisure park, museum and car-pick up station arose near the historic automobile factory. A new bridge connects the development to the historic city center and an ICE train station on the opposite bank of the midland canal. From here, the majority of visitors access the theme park through the Corporate Forum, whose monumental dimensions and imposing double wing doors serve as the main entrance to the park. This tall, bright, climate-controlled glass hall construction houses many sources of experience--walk-through colored cubes, restaurants, and cinemas, as well as several sculptures from various artists. The Corporate Forum, realized according to the principle of building within a building, represents an enclosed reserve urbanity. The empty space becomes a place of communication. ²⁴

From here the eye travels further along the hilly landscape, guided over bodies of water and bridges to where the other buildings present themselves. Embedded in the park landscape are individual pavilions of the corporation's automobile brands, such as Seat, Skoda, Lamborgini, Audi, Bentley and VW. Each brand complies with an aesthetically and emotionally designed structure. Each brand is represented individually, according to the diversified marketing structure of the parent company. Surprisingly, there are noticeably few cars shown, and the "character" of the respective brands is communicated instead with the assistance of an entertainment program. Lifestyle is celebrated in, among others, the pavilion showcasing the technical and highly specific brand Audi, where the apartment of a typical Audi driver is presented, complete with sushi and designer plates. The architecture of the brand pavilions serves as a transmitter of signals which attempt to creatively convey the associative scope of the brand. ²⁵

In this way, the corporation changes from automobile manufacturer to automobile and image producer. ²⁶

Next to the small-sectioned development of the park landscape, through the brand pavilions, stand the large-scale buildings--the so-called "Zeithaus" ("TimeHaus," a museum), the Customer Center, and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Behind them is the emblem and actual attraction: the pair of glass Auto Towers, both over forty meters tall. Here over eight hundred cars are temporarily stored before they leave the towers for the Customer Center. The true heart of the automobile factory can be surmised as the continual cycle of movement here.

In the Customer Center, up to six hundred new cars are picked up daily. Between 1,500 and 2,000 people come for this experience daily. The whole family comes here for the pleasure of watching the intensively staged final manual assembly of their own automobile, before the new car is personally handed over, already stowing the luggage they had checked in earlier.

The process of handing over a car follows a strict liturgy. Thus, the car brand constitutes a new founder of meaning, and calls for altruism, friendship and (brand) loyalty in an almost religious manner. Roughly 40% of the privately owned Volkswagens in Germany came to their owners in this way.

The Autostadt attracts age and visitor groups of financial means. The marketing of VW is meant to take place inconspicuously through partial renunciation of advertisement and company logos. With specially trained personnel, children and families are guaranteed a diversified, unforgettable experience. By means of various attractions, mostly of a playful manner, children and young people are given an understanding of all that is worth knowing about automobiles.

Shopaholics are also attended to. The three shops in the Autostadt are generously dimensioned and their assortment covers the spectrum of every possible salable good, from small souvenir to luxury item, and satisfies the high quality demands which the VW corporation itself appears to promote.

Through regular events in their own nightclub, as well as invitationals and exhibitions of esteemed celebrities and artists, a living cultural scene is created by synthetic means.

The corporation also presents itself as an institution which knows its social responsibility and would also like to satisfy this duty. Children are offered traffic school, adults are urged not to speed or drink alcohol before driving, and, not least, reference is made to the employment opportunities offered on site.

In this way, VW not only quotes its core competence as an auto producer, but also delivers the illusion of an holistically patterned, virtuous way of life. In the large community of the Autostadt, one samples familiar bonds, religion, passion and culture as well as entertainment and shopping as experiences in the meantime.

The leisure park "Autostadt Wolfsburg" is not a city in the actual sense. One must pay an entry fee; there are no inhabitants or townspeople, rather exclusively users and consumers. An urban structure of the development is likewise not to be deduced. Nonetheless, indications of a functioning civil society can be found in the labels "Forum" and "Piazza," deliberately formulated in this way. Living urbanity is suggested through staged variety, and due to its proximity to the city center, proffered infrastructure is used by more and more inhabitants of the actual city. Typologically, the Autostadt is more like a park. Like in an English landscape park, the brand pavilions are an invitation to linger. The miniature farmstead is replaced with a VW as the allegory for idyllic family values, the artistic volcano with a Lamborghini.



Fig. 4.31 Autostadt Wolfsburg - inside the "Konzernforum"

In the Autostadt, VW attempts to generate brand loyalty through a sort of flagship store on an urban scale. Additionally, next to the presentation of merchandise, a comprehensive entertainment program is offered in order to link the planning of leisure time to brand awareness. The success of this largely stylish self-portrayal can be read through the example of the VW model "Sharan," which was simultaneously sold as the Ford "Galaxy" and the significantly lower-priced Seat "Alhambra." Despite this higher price, the VW brand sold the best. ²⁷

In their advertisement booklet, the Autostadt characterizes itself not as a "World of Cars," but rather, as a "World Forum of Automobility". ²⁸ Instead of offering adrenaline-thrill experiences like a classic leisure park, stories and fables are sought which are capable of awaking specific and desired associations with the brand. For this reason, the Autostadt hired countless directors along with the architects and designers to develop a dramaturgical overall concept. The whole team was to be kept as far from possible from the product world.

The park, Corporate Forum buildings, Customer Center and Auto Towers speak a similar architectural language because general values like quality, safety, environmental awareness and social competence should be communicated. Henn, an architect, often uses the analogy of mother and child when speaking about the Corporate Forum and the pavilions.

Because the pavilions symbolize, visualize and materialize six different brands, they were designed by different architects. Instead of logos on the buildings, the visitor is meant to perceive through the architecture which brand pavilion he is in.

In this way, the supposed view of the user, as well as his reception, along with the predetermined attributes of the corporation, become an important starting point of the architectural planning. The attempt is to create spaces in which the visitor subconsciously perceives the brand, even without seeing the car.



Fig. 4.32 Autostadt Wolfsburg - Pavillions

The brand Volkswagen presents itself as a glass cube enclosed in an orb. Through these elemental geometric forms, the story of timelessness, democracy and perfection is told. The orb stands for eternity and consistency, the cube for stability and precision.

The Seat pavilion attempts to embody a mediterranean temperament and attitude towards life.

Through its sweeping architectural form, the ramp crossing the room is meant to materialize the motto, "Think Young." A 360-degree film projection emotionalizes the brand.

With a slick black fifteen-meter-high and slightly inclined cube, Lamborghini demonstrates brute muscular masculinity, vehemently defiant of all forces of nature. The emotionalized sound of the ignited engine: a roar, the marvel of Lamborghini realized.

The brand Skoda is presented as a gesamtkunstwerk-a total work of art. Staging and architecture use countless symbols and cultural references in order to represent the brands as grounded in tradition and of great cultural meaning.

The Bentley pavilion is made of green granite, and is analogous to a jewel in a setting embedded in a hill. In its form, the concealment of the structure underlines the elegance and understatement of the brand. The transition from the outside space's level of reality to the cinematic reality of the inner space is carried out in sequences, like in a film.

This concerns the idea of an accessible video clip, where the recipient slips into the role of the main character.

Through constant movement in the glass towers, work in the VW factory receives a presence in the Autostadt. The four giant smokestacks of the VW coal-fired plant stand facing the new towers, and it is only through this confrontation the Autostadt differentiates itself from a normal experiential themed park.

The brand myths which are staged by the architecture need a conflux of reality in order to seem believable.

A certain "eventisation" dominates production on the entire compound. Its narrative is no longer the fables of scientific and technical advances, as was the case with the World's Fairs, but rather the individual script of a production.

Because of the assimilation of the products of the automobile industry, other automobile manufacturers have also developed comparable concepts in order to connect customers to certain brands. The concept and dramaturgy of the space are very similar to the aforementioned methods.

Across the globe, brand product companies communicate their brand image through "brandlands." Brandlands (as, for example, "Adidas-Scape") are structured as a fluent landscape with freestanding buildings as eye-catchers. This landscape is arranged in cinematic sequences labeled "scenes," according to the same method with which Disney translates stories into rides. Through the manipulation of the area and contortions of perspective, the desired impressions are engendered. The impressions formerly defined in a storyboard are those which we, as visitors, users and consumers unconsciously expect. Because we, through modern media, have trained our perception in the various living rooms of this globalized world just like a "training ground of modern perception".²⁹



Fig. 4.33 Audi Pavillon



Fig. 4.34 Bentley Pavillon



Fig. 4.35 Lamborghini Pavillon



Fig. 4.36 Seat Pavillon



Fig. 4.37 Skoda Pavillon

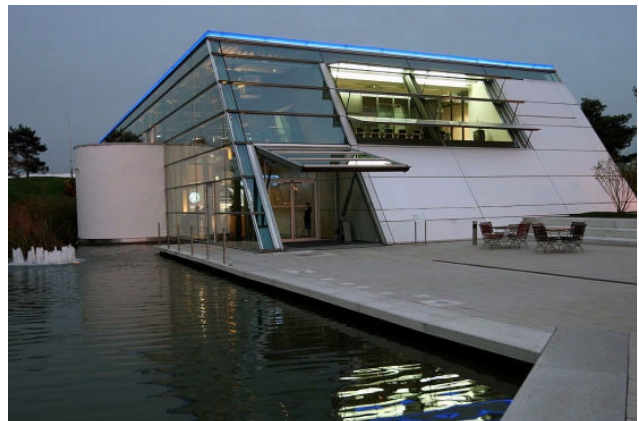


Fig. 4.38 VW Pavillon

Machen Sie sich schöne Tage.
In der Autostadt in Wolfsburg.



Fig. 4.39 "Enjoy nice days in the Autostadt in Wolfsburg"

5. Conclusion

In this work, the theme park is analyzed and applied to an architectural context. The last chapters have addressed the central question of the ways in which “disneyfication” shapes and influences contemporary architecture. My attention focuses primarily on the narrative, symbolic and cinematic aspects which find application in the architect’s repertory as visual and mental tools of the design process. It is worthwhile examining whether “learning from Disneyland” is valid, and in which ways composition and organization as methods of spatial production of a theme park have an impact on the development of architects’ planning methodologies.

For this examination of the questions posed in the introduction, first the widely-applied term “theme park” needed to be defined.

As a paradigmatic example for the phenomenon of the theme park, the Disney parks served as the object of my examination in successive sections.

Many architects go against the phenomenon of the themed environment on the grounds of aesthetics, which, as yet, have been dominated by conceptions of the classical modern. According to these conceptions, a supposed high culture contradicts the practice of theming-imbuing architectural aesthetics with symbolic content. Here, the canon of classical modern forms as well as the highly praised functionality based upon it are both ignored. Through this analysis of the theme park and the outlined specifications of the experience-based society, the third chapter shows that the theme park, or rather, the themed environment, is a structural rather than an aesthetic phenomenon. Consequently, purely formal criticism is an inapplicable implement.

The importance of pure composition steps behind the importance of the level of communication and experience. The visitors of the Disney parks and other commerce-based and experiential themed worlds are in on the papier-maché scenery and animatronics. They satisfy their desires for atmospheres and spaces which simultaneously trigger emotions and offer a “safe” adventure.

The post-Ford trend toward experiential themed worlds and spectacular stagings should not necessarily be dismissed as a trivial cultural discourse, but rather realized as a challenge to reconsider the development of planning methodologies. One can take pleasure in certain aspects of the design process in the art of Imagineering.

If the central focus of planning today is no longer space, but rather the experiences it enables and the identity which it conveys, then the themed environments of architecture, which mainly evolve from functional or economic criteria, are far superior on a communicative level.

If architecture becomes a product, and place becomes a commodity, then “disneyfication” enables more potential value (in the sense that spaces become readable, stimulate associations and endow identity), which is also reflected in economic success.

Another reason to characterize theme parks and experiential themed parks as banal lies

in the fact that the narrative level has become so carefully selected in terms of content that the most possible users from various cultures or socioeconomic levels are addressed. This work does not seek to appraise the semantic declarations of individual consumption-based and experiential themed worlds, but rather to survey the potential of an operational methodology.

The examples of the Jewish Museum show that architecture can, through theming, also communicate high-value critical political statements. Or, as in the case of many consumption-based worlds, architecture can also produce boring, clichéd images and situations incapable of facilitating dialogue.

The role of the television studios and amusement parks as city planners (or, as the case may be, the frequent stimuli from these sectors which have shopping centers, pedestrian zones and the neotraditional settlements of New Urbanism as the base of their composition) has come to be a matter of course in many places, and is no longer questioned. Furthermore, New Urbanism remains an American phenomenon.

A further point of criticism is the lack of authenticity of these postmodern illusory worlds. So-called "Event Culture" replaces high culture in times of fun- and consumption-focused society. The difference between reality and copy is made indistinguishable. Thus, a synthetic hyperreality arises, charged with marketing factors which dominate individual perception and, according to critics, repress critical thinking. Disneyfication is presented as manipulation and the loss of reality.

At the same time, it is often forgotten that one characteristic of experience-based society is the flux from world-based subject to subject-based world.

der Wandel vom weltbezogenen Subjekt zur subjektbezogenen Welt, ist.

These synthetically created spaces consist of compressed images and conceptions of both real and unreal places which people created for themselves under the influences of the media. Corporations like Disney simply take advantage of these demands and react to them with artificial places as products of a so-called "Place Industry."

Clearly there is a need for places with identity and individuality, whereby it is an advantage to conceptualize an experience-based theme world according to this viewpoint, and to also design architecture according to the aspects of tourism and the media. For this reason, new strategies are sought, whereby the different disciplines of art, film, dramaturgy, theater, and design must cooperate to create the desired atmosphere--one which must also have a partially narrative character. Experience-based theme worlds are consumed, demanded, and thus become products, whereby new standards for engineered environments emerge. Urban space is no longer shaped only by sights of interest, but also by international brands. The more this trend continues, the more architecture will address experience and marketing.

It is essential to speak to the broadest possible audience and create an environment offering many different possibilities. The future task of architects will be to grapple with these aspects and to find new solutions, in order to bring consumption and experience into harmony with the "true" identity of places.

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- ZUKIN, Sharon: The Cultures of Cities. Wiley-Blackwell. Cambridge/Massachusetts. 1995

Curriculum Vitae

Univ. Ass. Arch. Cro. Dipl.-Ing
Ines Nizic

13.01.1964 born in Makarska, Croatia
1993 married
2000 the Birth of daughter Ina

Education

1970-1978 Primary school in Makarska
1978-1982 Secondary school with focus on mathematics in Zagreb
1983-1990 Study of Architecture at the Architectural faculty, Technical University of Zagreb, Dipl.-Ing for Architecture
1997 Examination for Civil Engineer Licence, Croatia

Academically Education

Since 2005 Member and chairwoman at the Institutskollegium
2005 Visiting lecturer, KU Lueven, Contemporary Urban Transformations
1999-2002 Visiting lecturer, Technical University Zagreb
Since 1999 design classes, lectures and exhibition organization
Since 1998 Assistance Professor, Institute of architectural design and construction, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, TU Wien
1997/98 Visiting lecturer, Institute of architectural design and construction, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, TU Wien

Exhibitions, Congress participations, Lectures

2009 2nd International Architectural Conference, Patching the city, Rijeka
2009 Exhibition 44. Salon of Architecture, Zagreb, Exhibitor
2009 Summer exhibition 2009, Royal Academy London, Exhibitor
2009 - European 10, Conferences in Graz, Paris, Heraklion, Member of European Scientific Committee
2008 1st International Architectural Conference, Patching the city, Rijeka
2007-2009 European 9, Conferences Zagreb, Catania, Santiago de Compostela, Member of European Scientific Committee
2006 Exhibition 41. Salon Arhitekture, Zagreb, Exhibitor
2006 - European Scientific Committee, Conference
2006 European 9, Forum of sites, Berlin, Conference
2006 European 8, Forum of Results, Dordrecht, Conference
2006 European Technical Committee, Conferences, member
2006 Gradski Forum, Rijeka, Conference
2006 Ivanja Rijeka, architectural competition, Zagreb, jury member
2005-2006 European 8, Croatia, jury member
2005-2006 Wonderland - platform for architecture in Europe, Exhibition, Curator for Croatia
2005 Urban propositions and housing, Lecture at Post graduate centre, K.U. Leuven, B
2004-2005 Wonderland, Network for young architects, Conference
2004 YEA, Conference-The European dimension of the young architects, NAI Rotterdam
2004 Architecture in Progress, Vienna, lecture
2004 European 7, Athen, Dornbirn, exhibition
2003 European 7, Salzburg, Rijeka, exhibition

- 2003 Landscape and Architecture, Young Austrian Architecture in China, exhibition
- 2003 The sky above Zagreb, TU Zagreb, lecture
- 2002 Architecture for everyday, TU Zagreb, lecture
- 2002 architektur.bn, Innere Szene Wien, lecture
- 2002 Architecture Live, platform 9.81, Zagreb, lecture
- 2002 MEGA / The Alphabet_ project, lecture and exhibition, Künstlerhaus, Vienna
- 2002 From Landscape to Livingscapes, Vienna, lecture
- 2001 European 6, Burgoz, Stochkolm, Bruege, exhibition
- 2000 Exhibition 35. Salon of Architecture, Zagreb,
- 1999 Yeah, Exhibition of the Institute for architectural design and construction, Künstlerhaus, Vienna, concept and realisation
- 1998 Idesem 88, International Architecture and Design Conference, Split, participation
- 1997 Exhibition Beiträge zur Urbanität, Vienna
- 1995 Exhibition Frames of metropolis, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Amsterdam

Member of scientific associations

- 2006- European Scientific Committee, member
- 2006 European Technical Committee, member
- 2005-2006 Wonderland – platform for European architecture, Curator for Croatia
- 2004 Young European Architects, member for Austria

Prizes, Awards, Projects / Selection

- 2009- Realisation,
Single family house, Istria, Croatia
- 2008 Competition,
Drenove Triptih, Rijeka, Croatia
- 2007 Competition,
Schools Hasselt, Hasselt, Belgium
- 2007 Competition 2nd Prize,
Urban Gardens Borovje, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2006 Competition 2nd Prize,
Primary School Horvati, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2006 Competition, "5 Höfe", Masterplan, Living
- 2005 Competition 3rd Prize,
Primary School Culinec, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2005 Competition, Rijeka Library, Rijeka, Croatia
- 2005- Realisation, House K, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2004 Competition 3rd Prize,
Music Academy, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2003 Competition 1st Prize,
European 7 - "Extended view", Rijeka, Croatia
- 2003 Competition 1st Prize,
European 7 - "Innscape", Innsbruck, Austria
- 2003 Competition, Erstebank, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2003 Competition runner up,
Office building, Rohrbach, Austria
- 2003 Competition, office building, Taufkirchen, Austria
- 2002 Competition runner up,
Masterplan "Colonisation of the void", Zagreb, Croatia
- 2001 Competition 2nd Prize,
European 6 - "Waterscapes", Cordoba, Spain

- 2001 Competition 3rd Prize,
Europan 6 - "33Islands+", Karlskrona, Sweden
- 2000 Competition, Kunsthaus Graz, Graz, Austria
- 1999 Realisation, House INBT – Single family house, Zagreb, Croatia
- 1998 Competition final four,
Europan 5 – "Borders", Rovinj, Croatia
- 1998 Planning, Masterplan, Osijek, Croatia
- 1997 Competition 3rd Prize,
"Big House", Osijek, Croatia
- 1997 Competition runner up,
Bus station "Samobor", Zagreb, Croatia
- 1997 Competition runner up,
Kindergarten, Zagreb, Croatia
- 1996 Competition 3rd Prize,
Government building, Zagreb, Croatia
- 1996 Competition, Church, Zagreb, Croatia
- 1995 Planning, urban studies, Osijek, Croatia
- 1994 Competition 1st Prize,
"Urban Flow" Masterplan, Osijek, Croatia

Research

- 2001- The Influence of „Disneyfizierung“ on Contemporary Architecture,
Thesis, TU Wien
- 2003 Branding, Institut 253/4, TU Wien
- 2001 Intelligente Hüllen, Institut 253/4, TU Wien
- 2000 Schwimende Architektur, Institut 253/4, TU Wien
- 1999 Fliegende Architektur, Institut 253/4, TU Wien
- 1998 Rollende Architektur, Institut 253/4, TU Wien

Practice

- Since 1994 architektur.bn | ines nizic . sasa bradic
- 1996-1998 Collaborator, Berger + Parkinnen, Wien
- 1992-1996 Collaborator, Neumann & Steiner, Wien
- 1991 Collaborator, Arch DI S. Cadez, Köln
- 1990-1991 Architect, "Rabex", Zagreb
- 1988 Collaborator, Prof. Arch. Dipl.-Ing. Vodicka, Zagreb

Bibliographie / Selection

- 2009 "44. Salon of Architecture", Catalogue, Selector H. Ibelings,
Hrsg. The Croatian Architects Association
- 2008 "1000 Landscape Architecture", Hrsg. Braun, Berlin
ISBN 978-3-938780-60-2
- 2007 "Contemporary Croatian Architecture: Testing reality";
M. Mrduljas, V. Mimica, A. Rusan; Hrsg. Arhitekst d.o.o., Zagreb,
ISBN: 978-953-6888-07-8, S. 322 - 325.
- 2007 "246 Katalog natjecaja daz 2005"; Hrsg. DAZ
- 2006 "Zagreb Salon [Architecture 2006]"; Selector: M. Gausa; Catalogue,
Zagreb, 19.10.2006 - 19.11.2006.
- 2006 "Neostvareni projekti - Hrvatska arhitektura dvadesetog stoljeca",
T. Odak Hrsg. Urbis Littera, Upi-2m plus; Zagreb,
ISBN: 953-95098-3-1, S. 212 - 215.
- 2006 "National jury members - Europan has come of age";
CIP magazine of the Croatian Architects` Association,
620-621; S. 21 - 23.

- 2006 "EUROPEAN URBANITY European 7 and 8, Austria and Slovenia"; Hrsg. European Austria, European Slovenia; SpringerWienNewYork, Wien, ISBN: 978-3-211-47605-5, S. 128, 133 - 264, 269.
- 2006 "Wonderland Travelogue", Wonderland - platform for architecture; Hrsg. Wonderland - platform for architecture; SpringerWienNewYork, Wien, ISBN: 3-211-35444-1, S. 200 - 201.
- 2005 "Borders", Arhitektura, Journal of the Croatian Architects Association, 216; S. 44.
- 2005 "Dirty detailing", Arhitektura, Journal of the Croatian Architects Association, 216; S. 29 - 35.
- 2005 "Extended view"; Arhitektura, Journal of the Croatian Architects Association, 216; S. 60 - 61.
- 2005 "Innscape"; Zeitschrift Architektur & Bau Forum, 271, 04/2005; S. 4.
- 2004 "Erstebank", Zagreb, catalogue, Hrsg. DAZ, Zagreb ISBN 953-6646-13-7
- 2004 "Sub-urban challenge, urban intensity and housing diversity" EUROPAN 7, European results, Hrsg. European ISBN 2-915578-57-5
- 2004 "oris ideja"; Hrsg. Arhitekst d.o.o.; Catalogue, Zagreb, ISBN: 953-6888-02-5, S. 15.
- 2003 "ZwischenRäume", Hrsg. Institut for architecture and Design, TU Wien ISBN 3-902422-02-5
- 2003 "Lost paradies_Tourismus Tirol"; M. Surböck, M. Tomaselli, I. Nizic, B. Hromas, Institut für Städtebau, Landschaftsarchitektur und Entwerfen, Wien, 54 Pages
- 2002 "In between cities", EUROPAN 6, European results,, Hrsg. European ISBN 2-914296-06-1
- 2002 "European 6" Esp, Hrsg. Secretariado European / Espana ISBN 84-931656-4-6
- 2002 "European 6 Österreich" Austria, Hrsg. European Österreich, Klaus Kada und Bernd Knaller-Vlay; Selene, Wien ISBN 3-85266-200-1
- 2002 "European 6, European Sverige", European result book Hrsg. European Esti, Suomi Finland und Sverige; Artprint, Helsinki ISBN 951-9307-09-5
- 2002 "WOVEN, institute of architecture and building technology 2701, annual review 2000/2001", Concept, production: Ines Nizic Hrsg. TU-Wien, Institut für Hochbau und Entwerfen, Prof. Alsop, Wien ISBN 3-9501061-3-8
- 2002 "Uredenje prostora Save", catalogue, Hrsg. DAZ, Zagreb ISBN 953-6646-10-2
- 2000 "OOPS 2701", Hrsg. TU-Wien, Institut für Hochbau und Entwerfen, Prof. Alsop, Wien, ISBN 3-9501061-1
- 1999 "YEAH 2701", institute of architecture and building technology 2701 Hrsg. TU-Wien, Institut für Hochbau und Entwerfen, Prof. Alsop, Wien ISBN 3-9501061-1-2
- 2004 ORIS (Cro), 25/2004, P. 98 - 107
- 2004 X-rays, concerning transparency, structure and the sea
- 2004 ARCHITEKTURJOURNAL Wettbewerbe, 235/236, P. 118 - 121, P. 113
- 2004 Results of European 7 Rijeka, Kroatien and European 7 Österreich
- 2004 ARCHITEKTUR AKTUELL, contemplation, 5/2004, P. 14
- 2004 European 7, In den Intensitäten des Urbanen
- 2004 ARCHITEKTUR & Bau Forum, 256, 06/2004; S. 22
architektur.bn
- 2002 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), 5/6, P.70 - 71
Sava competition

- 2002 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), 7/8, P.62 – 65
Transition, workshop
- 2001 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), Edukacija 7/8, P.28 – 31, P.50 – 54
Europan 6, Karlskrona and Cordoba – Waterspaces
Inteligente Hüllen und Strukturen
- 1998 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), 3/4, P.26 – 37
Project for Kindergarten
- 1997 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), 3/4, P.26
Project for Bus station
- 1996 URBAN RULES, catalogue – International urban planning seminar, p.
86–91
- 1996 Project Initiating Trnje
- 1996 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), 9/10, P.32
Project for Government building
- 1996 COVJEK I PROSTOR (CRO), 7/8, P.22 - 24
Project Urban flows

Atelier

architektur.bn | Ines Nizic. Sasa Bradic
Burggasse 17
A – 1070 Wien
Tel: +43 1 9247068
E-mail: nizic@h1arch.tuwien.ac.at
Office: architektur.bn@chello.at
www.architektur.bn.net