24

Abstract
Technology

For the 24th incarnation of Architecture without content, we arrive in Brooklyn over Japan and California. If our journey over the past years was often driven by an obsession with everything big, including its consequences and the places these big boxes inhabit, it is the latest episodes at our Laboratory for Architecture as Form that inspired for a radical scale shift, in an attempt to find an architecture of the shared in the smallest of acupunctural interventions.

In the late 70s, Frank Gehry developed an architectonic language that was both simple and sophisticated and perfectly fit for a casual expression of 'some things public' in the laid-back sea of suburban California. Gehry's early buildings are cheap and unpretentious, simple boxes made casually complex through sudden collisions, fragmentary additions and bursts of surprising honesty. If his later work somewhat overshadowed this complex minimalism, we feel it is in these bizarre formal essays that we find a certain technological

abstraction. If more recent incarnations seem rather megalomaniac abstract expressionisms, it was his much earlier work that beholds a more fertile track, for an architecture of a radically formalist economy of means.

  A decade later, the ideal circumstances of the Kumamoto prefecture allowed Toyo Ito a very particular formal experiment. A loose technological language, smoothly developed in parallel with Sakamoto in small Tokyo constructions, could be adapted for a family of buildings to house and represent the shared. Each of the buildings developed architecture like a tent, as if to stretch the notion of shelter so it could house close to anything. These tent-like structures of only roof and that what it protects seem today precursors of the architecture of almost nothing developed in the late nineties by the french ideologists Lacaton and Vassal, albeit with a more formalist obsession, unafraid of naive expressions of beauty and faux formal poetry. Is it that this ultimately saves each

of the buildings of too little architecture?
It certainly gives the projects a raison-d'etre beyond the needs of sheer accommodation.

The Dutch artist Daan van Golden escaped the prison of abstract expressionism after a two year trip to Japan in the 1960's. His art, he realised, did not have to appear ex-nihilo, as an eruption of personal expression, but could rather reside in the careful copy and appropriation of formal gestures he found. This 'pop' abstraction became the red thread of a careful and slow oeuvre that investigated the boundaries of paint, figure, abstraction, copy and technology.

In many ways one could interpret this simple yet sophisticated approach to the making of art as a possible guide to building making. Van Golden's art is extremely accessible, superficially easy to understand and not devoid of the big gesture at the same time. The silent abstraction—almost zen-like—makes each of the works fundamentally undecipherable.

As tropes of another world they do not need to speak.

 In this semester we will start with Gehry and Ito and we will copy what we need, in order to develop a set of small public schools in the area East of Brooklyn (Greenpoint, Ridgewood, Bushwick, Glendale, Woodhaven, …). There are many reasons why today in the United States of America attention needs to be given—again—to small public infrastructures. Public schools are but one of the many terribly dated pieces of the shared building bulk. It seems fundamental that each of these buildings are many things in all their smallness, and house and shelter more than just kids. As veritable points of ideas they should encompass/behold the world we know, and all the ones we can imagine, without prejudice but confident, undecipherable: the public building is a tent.

Presentation

Piero della Francesca,
Polyptych of the Misericordia, 1445–1462,
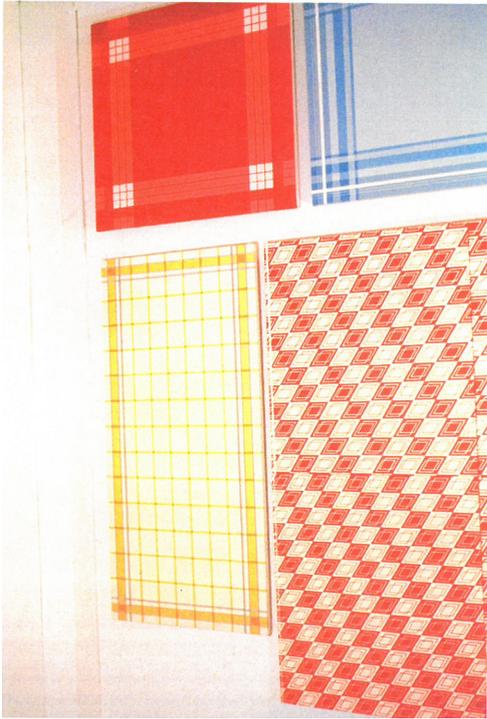Sansepolcro

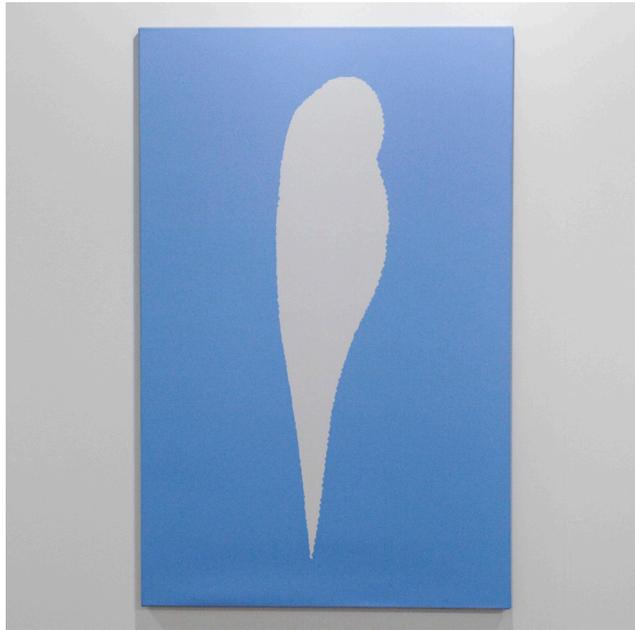| US Letter | US Letter | US Letter | US Letter | US Letter |
| US Legal | US Legal | US Legal | US Legal | US Legal |

All perspectives, 10km to 1m, all drawings, 1/10.000 to 1/10, panels will be enlarged to fit A0

Ancestors

Daan van Golden, 1964,
Naiqua Gallery Tokyo, *Patterns*,
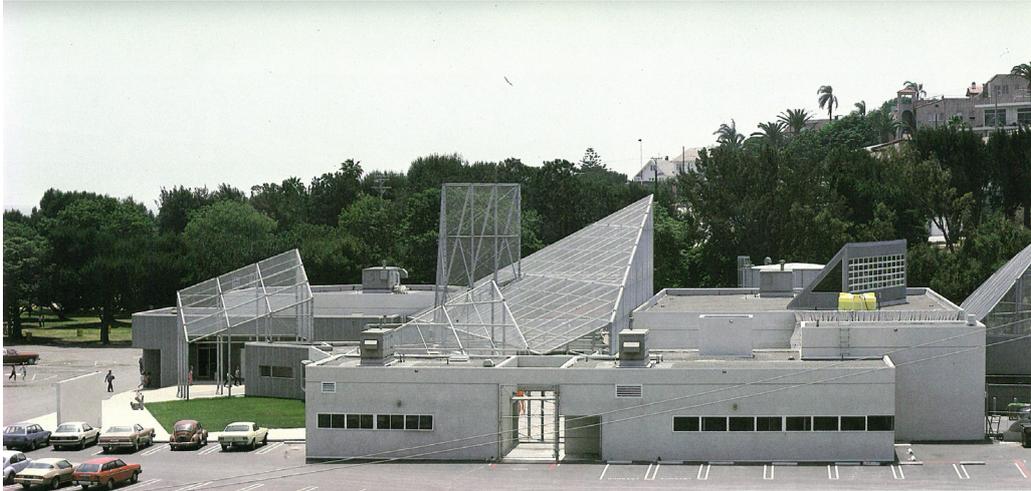Installation view

Daan van Golden, 2002,
Study H.M., oil on canvas, 135x85 cm

Daan van Golden, 2006, *Study Pollock*, 195x140 cm

Ancestors

Frank Gehry, 1979, San Pedro, California, Cabrillo Marine Museum
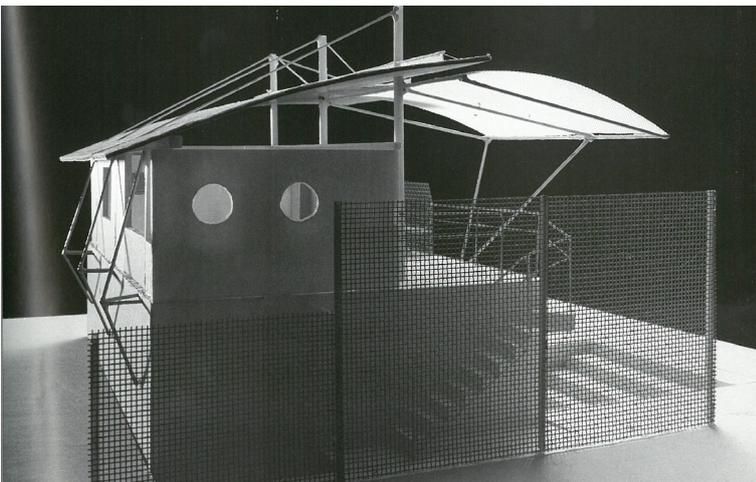

Frank Gehry, 1981, Los Angeles, California, Loyola Law School

Ancestors

Toyo Ito, 1988, Kumamoto, Japan, Yatsushiro Municipal Museum

Toyo Ito, 1992, Sakurashinmachi, Japan, Project for a studio in Sakurashinmachi

Toyo Ito, 1992, Yatsushiro, Japan, Elderly people's home

2017

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Without
Content