

Addendum

POST-THESIS RECAP

This thesis developed into a project focused on the betterment of human experience within architecture. The ultimate goal was to not only offer a type of architecture that more emotionally and spiritually resonates with those from the surrounding community whom will be occupying these spaces, but to also offer a highly efficient network of structural and building systems that works more collaboratively (and therefore more successfully) than those of typical contemporary architecture. The catch, though, is that the extreme efficiency is a convenient consequence of designing the built environment more like a high-performance automobile. This means that instead of designing to be green, the architect could design for a better human experience, and as a result, just happen to end up with something that can not only sustain itself, but also give back to the surrounding community in a number of ways.

The idea is that KAIROS is a "prototype" of sorts; this philosophy/approach would be altered and adapted into a number of different cultures, regions, communities, etc. People of different communities and regions react differently to varying material qualities, landscaping methods, transparencies and relationships with nature, etc. It is important to remember that in just the same way, there are all colors, finishes, types, shapes, etc. of automobiles; although the experience of driving one automobile may be inherently different from that of driving another, the networking of systems within those two vehicles are nonetheless very similar, meaning that the extreme efficiency would transfer contexts undoubtedly. This approach to design would change the way architecture functions for the better, it would improve the way architecture as a whole is experienced, and it would also offer more potential for the development, flexibility, and adaptation of the built environment in the long run.

TECHNOLOGICAL FEATS

I created a number of structural systems that all work together in this thesis. The sub-grade portion of this design proposal is a very sturdy, heavy system of concrete with major steel columns and anchoring. The above grade portion of this design proposal is ultra lightweight; it is made of carbon fiber structural elements and tensioning cable systems. Both of these, as well as the other components, work together to create a strong yet flexible system, similar to that of a high-performance automobile. This makes it an extremely valuable place during an earthquake.

I also have a number of energy generating and energy recovering strategies – just like in a Formula 1 racecar – that help to keep this structure as close to carbon-neutral as possible. The energy crisis is real, and strategies to help mitigate this must be incorporated from the beginning of the design phase. I have green spaces, ultra-porous surfaces, gutter systems within the building form, etc. to collect as much rainwater as possible and store it on site for grey water usage. Los Angeles doesn't get as much rain as other regions, and the drought is severe, so collecting every last drop for reuse is vital. I also proposed a number of piezoelectric surfaces to absorb shocks from people, vibrations from music and/or speakers, or earthquake vibrations in order to generate power for KAIROS. Transparent solar panels in place of windows offer a chance to both utilize and enjoy that sweet, golden, California sunshine.

In addition to all of the above though, there is a critical need in our contemporary world to better recycle and use recycled materials in design. The abundance of "garbage" is something that can easily be lessened with a few deep minds working collaboratively around a design table. One of the things I proposed with this thesis was the idea of creating flexible structural connections. Within these connections, there are shock-absorbing flexi-

pads or flexi-balls, which I proposed to use recycled tires to create (of all theses for these connections to be designed for, this one was beyond appropriate). I also proposed reclaimed wood for some of the ground floor designated pedestrian zones. The other major proposal of mine, was taking recycled plastic and vacuum forming it to create either flat or faceted-shaped panels for a building skin (also for the interior structural skin with punctured holes allowing LEDs to shine through). Rather than creating new plastics or new materials, why not recognize the abundance of plastic floating around our world and re-appropriate that wasted plastic in more useful ways? It seems almost counter-intuitive to me to keep making new things when we have a lot going on already.

FINAL REFLECTION

I have a number of thoughts about this project and how it could continue to move forward. I don't know that I am comfortable labeling this as a "finished thesis" because I will continue to think about it every day; this thesis has brought me lightyears closer to what I actually want to do within the field of architecture. I have learned a great deal and grown as a designer by looking at this thesis from a number of differing perspectives. From the beginning of the process up until this very moment, I have accomplished a great deal and could not be more proud of where I ended up. Yet, there is still a lot I would like to accomplish with this theory, and I plan to continue exploring, developing, refining, and advocating my stance on a lot of these issues. I look forward to what the future holds, and I cannot wait to see how KAIROS develops down the road.