c o r r e l a t i o n s :
fi l m a n d a r c h i t e c t u r e

"What once was created uniquely by film-makers, a screen environment where fact and fiction could be offered in all combinations as a continuum in time, is now becoming an everyday part of the creative realm of architecture. The areas of interest, the traditional skills, the arts and sciences of film and architecture, are reaching a symbiosis early practitioners could imagine but few could attain."

"Architecture exists, like cinema, in the dimension of time and movement. One conceives and reads a building in terms of sequences. To erect a building is to predict and seek effects of contrast and linkage through which one passes..."

Jean Nouvel, as quoted in Architecture and Film, "Echo and Narcissus," Kester Rattenbury

Introduction

Subsequent to the period known as the "Enlightenment" and extending up to the present time, an increasing emphasis on specialization and the bureaucratization of learning has taken place. This compartmentalization, obviously drawn from its roots in the industrial/production based age, must come under increasing scrutiny in an age that is rapidly moving into greater globalization, cultural diversity, and instantaneous communications vis a vis the Internet. The blurring of political boundaries through international commerce finds further evidence even within the physical boundaries of time and space, as virtual reality begins to emerge as an ever more present part of our day to day experiences.

What this begins to suggest for education in general, and architecture in particular, is the notion of creating, not discipline bound areas for investigation, but rather, the inter-relationship, and the correlation that might exist between multiple areas of knowledge. The complexity of the new Millennium is already filled with indefinable and unexpected situations that will increasingly become even more fluid. September 11 and subsequent events are evidence of this fluidity of changing cultural and political conditions. This suggests, within the context of this particular investigation, a need to open alternative channels that challenge the information-age based world of specialization. However, as we engage the Internet, the notions of boundary and
specialization increasingly blur such distinctions. How do we address these situations as we move further into the 21st Century?

**New Strategies**

The studio will be one attempt at establishing correlations and relationships between two disciplines that have, historically informed one another, namely film and architecture. By examining in greater detail, specific themes in both disciplines both theoretically as well as through their physical iterations, perhaps we can find new possibilities for further engagement, as well as new directions that challenge the continually emerging specializations.

To do this will involve three components:

1. Students will select from a series of films that represent various themes and principles of film theory:
   - Aura and re-presentation
   - Narrativity: linear/spatial
   - Montage: cut/dissolve
   - Set/place
   - Genres/typologies
   After screening a selected film, each student will develop a series of 2 and 3 dimensional studies analyzing the film’s construct and theoretical attributes.

2. An architectural correlation: Based on a given site, the students will engage in research, analysis and conceptual studies for an experimental film center as an extension of the Northwest Film Center in Portland. The intention of the center will be to engage the public in a hands-on setting involving both the fabrication as well as screening of cinematic works representing their own making. The architectural studies will involve site analysis, project programming, conceptualizations based on film theories and principles, design development and final design presentations.

3. Together with presenting the final design, the students (time permitting) will prepare a brief (2 minutes or less) film that tells a story regarding both the film they selected and their architectural response.

**Schedule**

To be determined

**Films:**

*Rear Window*, Alfred Hitchcock, 1954  
*Playtime*, Jacques Tati, 1967  
*The Passenger*, Michaelangelo Antonioni, 1975  
*Blade Runner*, Ridley Scott, 1982  
*Notebook on Cities and Clothes*, Wim Wenders, 1989  
*The Truman Show*, Peter Weir, 1998
Texts:


Equipment:

In addition to screening equipment (i.e. VCR/DVD/monitors etc.) the students would need to have access to a video camera. I can provide my own. However, to make the final component work reasonably well, more than one camera would be needed. It might be that this is not at all possible. In that event I would probably eliminate that component. One alternative would be an architectural “story board” depicting the various concepts and images from both the film as well as the students’ own architectural designs. I attach an example: