

Tesis Doctoral

Imagen y lenguaje arquitectónico: un análisis
transdisciplinar del caso Fórum Barcelona 2004

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**4 Entrevista a Agustí Argelich, director del departamento de
Fotografía del Fórum Barcelona 2004, 14 de junio de 2004,
Barcelona**

OB: Como eres el responsable del departamento de fotografía quería realizarte algunas preguntas referidas al material gráfico que manejaís ¿Qué tipo de imágenes utilizáis para difundir el Fórum en los medios?

AA: Hasta antes del Fórum el 70 % eran fotos de archivo o que se compraban a agencias o fotógrafos particulares. Ahora ya no pasa esto prácticamente. Durante un año funcionamos como un departamento de fotografía; se han generado tantas imágenes en la casa que ya no hace falta comparar imágenes. Se ha ido realizando un seguimiento de muchos temas: culturales, espectáculos, temas humanos. Tomamos muchas fotografías de recursos para que luego el propio Fórum la pueda utilizar.

OB? ¿Qué tiene que tener una imagen para ser incluida en los folletos o revistas del Forum? ¿Qué valores buscas transmitir?

AA: Comunicar el Fórum ha sido muy difícil. Hay etapa pre-Fórum y una posterior. No ha sido fácil comunicar con fotografías un evento que todavía no se ha hecho ninguno en todo el mundo, no es como el caso de un puerto olímpico que tienes imágenes de archivo de deporte o de cualquier otro tema. Entonces, se ha optado por transmitir la agenda de valores, es decir imágenes que se asocien a alegría, fraternidad, paz, multiculturalidad, gente de diferentes razas. Se busca una actitud positiva delante de la cámara.

OB: En los comienzos en las publicaciones del Fórum predominaban imágenes de una estética borrosa, en las que resultaba difícil reconocer lo que se mostraba, ¿Por qué fue esto?

AA: Estas fueron algunas primeras imágenes de Rafael Vargas, esto ya no nos funciona. La estética borrosa nos funcionó bien al principio, porque se tenía que ilustrar exposiciones que todavía no se sabía de lo que iban. Pero esto en los comienzos, cuando se materializó el proyecto con el lanzamiento del segundo logo, ésto marcó un poco.

OB: Con las imágenes de la ciudad o la arquitectura ¿a qué apuntas, qué buscas transmitir?

AA: Va en función del cliente de la casa. Cuando se transmite Barcelona para un folleto turístico, evidentemente tiene que salir *Sagrada Familia*, la *Casa Batllo*, la *Pedrera* y un poco la parte nueva, el *Mareamgnum*, el *Port Vell* que se ha recuperado. Todo este tipo de imágenes se obtienen en función del público al que están orientados. Cuando es un catálogo de los diálogos para un público catalán o español prima un tipo de fotografía, pero cuando es para un público más internacional prima otro tipo de imágenes. Un periódico o una revista de fuera tendrá requerimientos particulares para cada reportaje que quiere realizar.

OB: Y para mostrar los edificios y los espacios del Fórum ¿Cuál es el criterio?

AA: Para transmitir un espectáculo hace falta el actor, pero sobre todo el público, y en el caso de la arquitectura se intenta mostrar el público utilizando los edificios. Buscamos primeros planos de la gente esto es básico.

OB: He visto que hay un gran número de imágenes en las que se muestran edificios y espacios característicos de Barcelona ¿Estas imágenes a nivel ciudad de dónde provienen?

AA: En los folletos las mayorías de las fotos han salido del archivo previo que teníamos del banco de imágenes que algunas veces se han comprado los derechos hasta octubre del 2004. Es decir igual desde el año 1997 o 1998 ya se tenían algunas imágenes en diapositivas en un archivo químico. Desde hace dos años se ha venido haciendo seguimiento en digital, el 90% es de este formato. La nueva tecnología de la fotografía posibilita la implementación de panorámicas de gran tamaño, negativos de 9 x 17 y escaneos a alta resolución.

OB: Viendo las fotografías asociadas al Fórum se pone en evidencia una insistencia en la temática del cuerpo.

AA: Es un recurso que pienso hemos utilizado mucho. Nos ponemos en el lugar de público y tratamos de buscar la expresión humana viendo como la gente participa de las diversas propuestas. Ahora estamos trabajando en una publicación para octubre seleccionando las mejores imágenes que reflejen que relación ha tenido el Fórum con el público en general, no sólo en el recinto sino en la ciudad de Barcelona. Seguramente habrá imágenes muy curiosas que poca gente espera ver.

OB: ¿Quiénes son los encargados de recoger las imágenes del Fórum?

AA: Hay un equipo de fotógrafos, aproximadamente unos 47, que entraron a través de un concurso público. Ellos están especializados en tres tipos de fotografías de reportaje, fotografía de estudio y luego unos cuantos especializados en fotografía de arquitectura y espacio en función de las necesidades se va convocado a los especialistas.

OB: ¿Quién toma las decisiones y con qué criterio selecciona las fotografías?

AA: Van en función de clientes de fondo fotográfico. Luego esta la propia casa con el departamento de prensa llamado el 'BCN'. Ellos nos encargan cada día dos o tres reportajes según las actividades del Fórum: ruedas de prensa, visitas importantes o aquello que es noticia. 'BCN', tiene acceso diario a este material. Este centro nos pide y escoge de todo el material las imágenes a publicar, sobre todo buscan fotografías tipo prensa, que es una imagen más protocolar.

OB: Hay imágenes que parecen provenientes de un anuncio publicitario o de un proyecto comercial, como se combina esa estética con los valores del Fórum?

AA: Esas imágenes más publicitarias las lleva el departamento de imagen. Ellos también hacen su selección de banco de datos. A veces también la selección de la imagen viene por un encargo. Este puede venir de una revista de deporte, moda o arquitectura. Entonces en base a estos requerimientos específicos se busca el material en la base de datos o se lo manda a realizar.

OB: ¿Tenéis alguna estructura en la catalogación de las imágenes? ¿Cómo las organizáis?

AA: Bueno tratamos de cubrir todo. La fotografía de prensa, espectáculos y arquitecturas. Tanto en el propio recinto como en la ciudad. Se han cubierto todos estos eventos que ha habido en el Rec o el Mercat de les Flors. También se intenta recoger el ambiente del sector con fotos de día, de noche pensando en la organización de una memoria del Fórum.

OB: Tú has vivido y estudiado en Barcelona, consideras que este medio local te ha influenciado en tu formación profesional? ¿Podrías nombrar algunos referentes de tu carrera?

AA: La gente de mi edad es muy autodidacta. Yo estude en el IMAF. La gente de ahora tiene mucho más medios. Yo vengo mucho de la fotografía deportiva, que es lo que me gusta. Me especialicé en los juegos Olímpicos en la fotografía de organización. Fui responsable de la memoria oficial de los juegos. Y además he cubierto diversos eventos deportivos. Mi mayor influencia viene de ese campo, de revistas como: *Ole*, *Sport*, *Reuter*. La fotografía deportiva da mucho de sí. Aprendo mirando periódicos, analizando las imágenes que se muestran, viendo la relación con el título o el pie de página, veo quien la ha hecho, aprendo de otros fotógrafos.

OB: Ahora que has comentado el traspaso a la tecnología digital ¿Qué ventajas a significado este cambio?

AA: Ventajas a nivel de costes. Las casas comerciales han sacado cuerpos digitales con las ópticas de los cuerpos analógicos. Disparas mucho más, generas más fotografías, 8 o 9 por segundo. Pero luego viene la segunda parte que es la edición que poca gente lo entiende. Cuando haces un reportaje de media hora tienes unas 300 que has disparado. Tendrás que hacer entontes una preselección muy rápida descartando la mitad, pero por A o por B no las desestimias. El hecho que no haya un costes como había antes, implica luego un mayor trabajo de edición. Necesitas un equipo de personas que sepa de encuadre fotográfico, maneje los programas de edición. Lo normal es que el mismo fotógrafo lo haga.

OB: ¿Cómo es en tu propio caso, lo haces tú?

AA: Hacemos la preselección, pero luego hay un equipo de cuatro personas que están trabajando por turnos. Los fotógrafos marcan de cada reportaje de 100 fotos unas doce. De esta selección indica que cambios cree que sería conveniente realizar en cuanto a la luz, brillo, saturación, matiz de color y lo comenta con el editor. El *Photoshop* nos salva muchas fotos. En un momento dado una foto pobre de color puede ser modificada gracias a los medios digitales. Pero casi siempre tratamos de trabajar con la creatividad antes de hacer la foto. Preferimos trabajar con el encuadre más que con el retoque, procurando que los retoques sean los mínimos.

OB: Muchas gracias Agustín, fue muy interesante hablar contigo.

**5 Entrevista al sociólogo Manuel Delgado, 12 abril 2005,
Barcelona**

OB: Estaba interesado en hablar contigo sobre la función de la imagen arquitectónica que aparece publicada en los medios, en particular en el caso del Fórum Barcelona 2004, que opinión te merece al respecto?

MD: Lo importante creo que fue no solamente cómo el Fórum se representó a través de la forma arquitectónica, sino también el movimiento de protesta contra el Fórum. Se escogió la imagen de edificios arquitectónicos como imagen de la protesta.

OB: ¿Te refieres a la imagen del triángulo de Herzog?

MD: Sí, ese edificio que parece una discoteca hortera. Aunque me recuerdo que en afiches o en sitios de internet se implementó la imagen de la Torre Agbar como emblema de la oposición; a la que se la consideraba un valor transgresor.

OB: En tu último libro *Elogi del Vianat*, juegas un poco con las palabras refiriéndote al modelo Barcelona y la Barcelona modélica, relacionada al mundo de la moda. ¿Cómo ves la inclusión de la imagen arquitectónica en este contexto?

MD: Mi punto de vista, lo quiero dejar claro de entrada, no es el de un arquitecto, sino de un antropólogo que entiende la forma urbana como el escenario sobre el que se desarrolla lo que a él le interesa que es la acción. Y particularmente un tipo de acción urbana, donde la arquitectura es esencialmente un marco ecológico, un referente o un decorado. Yo contemplo a la arquitectura desde esa perspectiva.

OB: ¿Dentro de esta perspectiva que mención te merece el modelo Barcelona?

MD: El modelo Barcelona no existe. Por definición el modelo es un modelo, ideal, que remite al ámbito de las ideas platónicas abstractas, conceptos o imágenes pero nunca al mundo de lo real.

OB: ¿Y quién define dicho modelo imaginario?

MD: Aquellos que quieren convertir la imagen de la ciudad en mercadería. El modelo se basa en imágenes. El modelo como tal no puede ser más que una imagen.

OB: Siempre insistes haciendo un paralelismo, es decir separando entre lo real y lo imaginario hablando de imágenes de proyectos arquitectónicos.

MD: El modelo es realidad también, según para quién es más realidad que la realidad misma. Lo real es el resto y de lo que se sabe poco. El modelo se sintetiza y se convierte en imagen comercial, el logotipo. El modelo se convierte en un conjunto de lemas, una marca. Se convierte un artículo de consumo como cualquier otro.

OB: ¿Qué comentario puedes hacer sobre el proceso que Francesc Muñoz describe a este respecto de la imagen de las ciudades que él describe como ‘urbanalización’?

MD: Representa un modelo de triunfo final de lo fácil, de una simplificación brutal que coge los lenguajes que le presta la publicidad de función narcótica. Dicho sistema busca sorprender, entusiasmar por la vía del impacto fácil. Un referente que hace más alusión al barroco que a la modernidad, reflejando un amor por la bambalina y los efectos ópticos.

OB: Podrías realizar una comparación o paralelismo entre lo que pasó con el Fórum Barcelona 2004 y el manejo de las imágenes arquitectónicas y lo sucedido con el Juegos Olímpicos?

MD: Fue prácticamente lo mismo. A diferencia que los Juegos Olímpicos, como producto tenían una base de legitimidad mucho más fundada que no en el caso del Fórum. El asunto que se agitaba como excusa o coartada tenía una reputación mucho mayor, que no el de un invento que se veía descaradamente que era un elemento ex profeso para llevar a cabo un conjunto de operaciones de tipo urbanísticas inmobiliarias. En el fondo en aquella época todavía se podía vender una ilusión que luego se veía fracasada. Cuando se concretó la idea estaba bien, pero al momento de comenzar las obras ya estaba desinflada. Barcelona a partir del año 96 se ve convertida en escenario de todo tipo de conflictividades, de desmentidos de esa visión idílica que se quería dar de una imagen de un concepto político dominado por un espacio público integrador y vertical en el que reinaba la paz de planos y proyectos y donde los políticos y arquitectos podían ver realizada su ilusión, su alucinación de ciudad perfecta.

OB: En tu libro citas la publicación *¿Barcelona cap a on vaix?*, donde rescatas la imagen del nuevo puerto olímpico del '92 y lo comparas con la imagen de Copacabana. ¿Cómo entra el Fórum Barcelona 2004 dentro de este punto de vista de la imagen urbanística?

MD: Yo creo que es un ejemplo de algo que ha querido ser y que no ha sido finalmente. Y no digamos lo que acabará siendo Diagonal Mar, seguramente igual que Pedralbes será un gueto. Un barrio marginal e inhóspito.

OB: Yo intentaba recalcar lo que tú mencionas de la imagen de Copacabana, cuando dices que el litoral de Barcelona será la nueva postal para turistas.

MD: Barcelona es toda ya Copacabana, una ciudad ‘tematizada’. Es una ciudad que no tiene nada más y vende su propia piel. No tenemos más que espectáculos, en el fondo no tenemos más que imágenes. No son las imágenes de Barcelona. Barcelona es solamente sus imágenes. Detrás de esos decorados no hay nada. La ciudad ha generado una iconografía que se distribuye como referente en los medios, todo lo demás no existe.

OB: Eso me recuerda una frase tuya cuando afirmas “Todo evento empieza por un gran espectáculo”. Las olimpiadas comenzaron con la actuación de La Fura dels Baus y en el caso del Fórum fue muy parecido.

MD: Lo mismo, espectáculo. Espectáculo que esconde especulación. En el caso del Fórum se trataba de asegurar que existiría una franja inevitable e inhabitada que mantendría la distancia mínima de seguridad entre la zona dura, peligrosa, marginal de La Mina y ese nuevo gueto para ricos que sería Diagonal Mar. El Fórum estaba ahí como una especie de cortafuegos o de colchón enorme cuya función era garantizar esa distancia mutua, donde unos y otros nunca se tocarían. Esa fue la función que tuvo, ni más ni menos, todo lo demás es mentira. Mentira productiva, que convierte a Barcelona en un producto cosmetizado. Se convertirá en un sitio en el que vivirán sólo un grupo de personas los que se adecuen a esos patrones estéticos y en donde la pobreza y la miseria desaparecerán. Es decir lo real no tendrá lugar. De hecho la normativa actual en marcha lo que hace es perseguir la pobreza y la fealdad.

OB: Tu lectura de la ciudad o del hecho urbano y sus acontecimientos esta teñida de una visión un poco negativa o pesimista ¿A qué se debe?

MD: La antropología es una disciplina acrónicamente negativa. En el fondo es un postura negativa en tanto que se niega a ofrecer alternativas, se abstiene a la hora ser positiva. Para un antropólogo no puede haber una buena ciudad.

OB: ¿Por qué no?

MD: Porque implicaría que todas las demás ciudades son malas. Eso sería incompatible para nosotros, que nos identificamos con el relativismo. Por fuerza te remite a un negativismo casi nihilista de que en el fondo cualquier afirmación es excluyente. La negación no es excluyente. Y cuidado, una afirmación negativa de la ciudad sería un elogio de la no-ciudad; que es todo lo demás, lo nomádico, inestable, incongruente, lo viviente, todo lo que atraviesa la ciudad menos la arquitectura. Es abstenerse a proclamar una buena idea, negarte a ser constructivo, porque eso básicamente te convierte en excluyente de cualquier forma de vida que no se adecue al modelo que se cree que es adecuado. Soy pesimista ante cualquier propuesta de calificación positiva de la ciudad. No tengo idea de cómo hay que hacerla, quién debe hacerla ni por qué, me niego por completo a contribuir a ello.

OB: Me he dado cuenta que en tu publicación haces mucha referencia a Bohigas y a sus pensamientos sobre la ciudad de Barcelona. ¿Por qué lo consideras un arquitecto tan destacado?

MD: Si, claro es uno de los grandes ideólogos del momento. Me atrevo a recomendarte sus artículos que se animaron a criticar el proyecto del Fórum Barcelona.

OB: De acuerdo, muchas gracias Manuel.

6 Entrevista a la profesora Dra. Beatriz Colomina realizada el 23 de mayo de 2006 en Princeton, Estados Unidos

OB: Como primera aproximación, me interesaría que me comentaras sobre tus comienzos en Estados Unidos, ¿Por qué decidiste cambiar el panorama académico europeo por el americano?

BC: Bueno, me vine no se bien porque, esas son cosas en realidad un poco personales. Yo quería salir de Barcelona. Al igual que había llegado a Barcelona desde Valencia y me había sentido medianamente bien, porque es como más grande y más cosmopolita. La escuela de arquitectura a mí me había parecido muchísimo más interesante que la de Valencia. Después de siete años en Barcelona me hacía falta como cambiar otra vez. Yo al comienzo pensaba que era por un año. Vine a Nueva York para que me diera un poco el aire. Y me pasó exactamente lo mismo que al llegar a Barcelona desde Valencia, con la misma sensación de entrar a una ciudad más grande, más anónima, energética, que da como un 'hi' impresionante. Eso unido al hecho de que tuve la suerte de aterrizar en este sitio que se llama 'The New York Institute for the Humanities', que es diferente del famoso 'Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies' que llevaba Peter Eisenman, este lo llevaba Richard Sennett y había gente como, Susan Sontag. Estaba también Tony Vidler, se hacían seminarios sobre la ciudad y venían gente como Christine Vouyer. Total, que me di cuenta allí que la investigación en Estados Unidos era completamente diferente de lo que yo había experimentado en Barcelona. Me interesaba mucho esta aproximación interdisciplinaria que no existía tampoco en Estados Unidos. Eso de encontrarte, que es una cosa muy americana, con tus veinte tantos años y la gente que estaba allí de unos setenta. Había gente entre veinte y setenta todos en la misma habitación y tratados de la misma manera y eso me impresionó muchísimo. Daba lo mismo si discutíamos mi trabajo o el de Susan Sontag. Eso me abrió los ojos muchísimo, yo aprendí de su manera de trabajar, eso fue una gran influencia para mí. En aquella época yo comencé a trabajar sobre algo que luego lo desarrollé en tiempos más cercanos que era el tema de las enfermedades y la arquitectura. Me interesó mucho la tuberculosis y el miedo a la tuberculosis en la arquitectura moderna, los rayos X, el psicoanálisis. Hice una serie de trabajos sobre Cite y el psicoanálisis y algunas fobias que tenían que ver con el espacio. El tema de la tuberculosis lo analicé con Garnier y Le Corbusier. Eso fue lo que hice el primer año. Mi segundo año en Nueva York pedí una beca y me la dieron, esta vez acabé en Columbia University. Durante el tiempo que había estado siempre iba a la biblioteca a Columbia, porque era mucho mejor que la de New York University que es la que me educaba a mí, y allí conocí a Kenneth Framton. Él me propuso ir a Columbia como 'visiting scholar' y eso hice.

OB: A esta altura eras muy joven, ¿tenías unos veinticinco años?

BC: Yo creo que tenía veintisiete para entonces. Yo estaba allí en Columbia y otra vez fue un año de investigación. Pero a esas alturas, yo ya había trabajado *full-time* en Barcelona, es que yo acabé muy pronto; yo comencé la escuela de arquitectura con dieciséis años y terminé con veintiuno o veintidós. Cuando llegué a Columbia al principio me dedicaba a mi investigación y el primer año hice así. El segundo año, en el semestre de otoño, les faltó un seminario y Framton me preguntó por qué no lo hacía yo. Me dio un poco de miedo, pero me dije 'hay que atreverse', lo hice, salió muy bien y el año siguiente me encargaron que hiciera más cosas y luego Steven Hall me pidió que hiciera un estudio o clase práctica

de proyección. Es decir que me encontraba enseñando al mismo tiempo que escribía mi tesis. Un día me llamaron de Princeton porque había un profesor que se iba en año sabático. Y era típico que en todas las escuelas de arquitectura existiera un seminario sobre Le Corbusier; como él se iba y yo había investigado sobre Le Corbusier, me lo ofrecieron a mí. Entonces vine aquí a enseñar un seminario sobre Le Corbusier. Yo seguía enseñando en Columbia pero venía aquí los martes, era como mi día en el campo, cogía el tren. Me gustó muchísimo esta experiencia y al final del semestre Princeton me ofreció una posición *full-time* y yo muy tonta y 'snob' le conteste que prefería vivir en Nueva York y me volvía a Columbia. Yo no me daba cuenta lo que decía, esto era una propuesta a tiempo completo con todos los beneficios y lo que yo tenía en Columbia era *part-time*. Estaba completamente pava, pero pensaba que no podía dejar Nueva York. Después de un año vino Tony Vidler a New York a convencerme y me di cuenta de lo que estaba haciendo y me trajo a Princeton.

OB: ¿Por qué crees que la investigación americana, como has mencionado tú, es diferente a la europea? ¿Cómo encajaba en dicho contexto tu propuesta de investigación sobre la historia de la arquitectura moderna enfocada desde los *media*?

BC: Al principio era una cosa muy desigual. Por un lado había resistencia y había gente de mi generación que eran muy observadores, gente de *Revisions* de Nueva York, estaban nerviosísimos, no parecía que podías tocar la figura de Le Corbusier de esta manera. Y por otro lado había un grupo de gente que le parecía fascinante como Tony Vidler, Framton o la gente de Princeton. Incluso yo me encontré en la situación casi incomprensible que estaba escribiendo los primeros capítulos de mi tesis y ya me estaban invitando a dar conferencias en el MOMA y Harvard. Si tu ves mi CV, es impresionante a los momentos que yo estaba dando los primeros balbuceos de mi tesis realmente. Es decir por un lado había aceptación y por otro nerviosismo y tensión. Siempre me andaba peleando, eso me animaba mucho también como había pelea y resistencia, yo pensaba es que debe haber algo bueno aquí.

OB: ¿Cómo llegas a la conclusión de que la arquitectura de comienzos de siglo XX, se comenzó a gestar en los medios? De alguna manera se conecta con Marshall McLuhan y su idea de que "el médium es el mensaje".

BC: No llegué a través de Marshall McLuhan, yo lo conocí mejor más adelante en realidad. Yo llegué más bien a través de Walter Benjamín. Es verdad que al estar en Columbia, también estaba muy expuesta a esas posiciones 'frantonianas' directamente contra los *media*. Me impresionaba, nunca llegué a entender porque tenía tal animosidad contra los *media*, cuando yo lo veía a él como parte de los *media* mismos. Entonces empecé a pensarlo, pero tampoco fue una cuestión deliberada. Al principio yo pensé que estaba haciendo una tesis sobre Loos, después pensaba que era una tesis sobre Le Corbusier. Y cuando estaba haciendo una tesis sobre Le Corbusier pensaba que estaba haciendo una tesis sobre la revista *L'Epirit Nouveau* todo esto en un espacio de un año y medio. Cuando decidí que iba hacer sobre Le Corbusier me fui a la Fundación porque allí podía ver todo.

Entonces allí, en los archivos mismos de la Fundación es donde me encontré con todo este material que transformó mi visión de Le Corbusier. No fue al revés, yo no vine con una idea de trabajar Le Corbusier y los media. Iba a trabajar solamente sobre Le Corbusier y la revista *L'Esprit Nouveau*. Me interesaba investigar sobre esta idea de 'network' de las vanguardias que se organizaban a través de las revistas de arquitectura. Me interesaban mucho las revistas de arquitectura. Yo enseñé un seminario en Columbia que era sobre revistas de vanguardia y a partir de allí comencé a pensar en hacer la tesis sobre *L'Esprit Nouveau*. Fue al estar en la Fundación (Le Corbusier) que mi visión comenzó a cambiar, empecé a descubrir la influencia de la publicidad. Sólo mucho más tarde, me di cuenta que Loos y Le Corbusier eran parte del mismo proyecto.

OB: ¿Cómo ves esa relación Arquitectura-*media* en la actualidad? ¿Se puede llegar a reconocer un proceso de retroalimentación entre las dos?; por un lado los medios de comunicación incorporan imágenes arquitectónicas en su material gráfico y por otro los arquitectos se favorecen de dicha difusión a través de publicaciones.

BC: Lo que es interesante del momento en que yo estaba estudiando, a diferencia de hoy, en que las cosas están mucho más exacerbadas, es que era el inicio. El momento en que aparecen este fenómeno mediático. Me interesaba la reacción tan fuerte de Loos de denuncia de los arquitectos que según él se venden a las revistas de arquitectura y transforman su arquitectura de manera que aparezca bonita en las revistas. Loos criticaba la arquitectura de por ejemplo Hofmann, diciendo que sus proyectos eran bidimensionales. En cambio su propia arquitectura, postulaba Loos, no se podía apreciar más que viéndola en persona. Estos debates sobre el inicio y el uso de la fotografía en la arquitectura me interesaban muchísimo, y eso ya se vio en el trabajo de Loos que fue el primero que hice. Eso es como conecta mi investigación sobre las imágenes de arquitectura y los *mass media*.

OB: Se podría afirmar entonces que la herramienta gráfica de la imagen arquitectónica es el elemento en común que vincula y da sentido a todo tu trabajo

BC: Sí, pero no fue una cosa consiente. Yo empecé sin saber muy bien a donde iba todavía. Un poco a salto de matas como se dice, pero que también funciona a veces.

OB: En tus diferentes investigaciones sobre imágenes arquitectónicas en los *media*, has reconocido un efecto impactante debido a su difusión; algunos proyectos de la modernidad a pesar de que no se construyeron nunca quedaron en la memoria al ser publicados en las revistas. ¿Qué comentario me puedes hacer al respecto?

BC: Si exacto, hubo proyectos que no se realizaron como los de Mies, pero que quizás tienen más influencia porque no se materializaron nunca pero que circulan a través de las revistas, los dibujos, no solamente la fotografía; como por ejemplo en el caso de la *Brick Country House*.

OB: Como mencionabas anteriormente, todo este proceso de mediatización de imágenes de arquitectura se ha exacerbado en los últimos años. ¿Cómo ves el panorama actual?

BC: Yo creo que si tuviera que hacer un estudio sobre el presente, tendría que volver a pensarlo radicalmente, porque es una condición completamente diferente. Es muy difícil mirar el presente. Cuando yo miraba hacia atrás a Loos y los inicios de la fotografía, era interesante ver como la gente reacciona y se posicionaba en relación a ello.

OB: A propósito de ejemplos contemporáneos de arquitectura en los medios. En el año 2004 se organizó un evento urbanístico en Barcelona que tuvo como principal aliado a los medios de comunicación. ¿Has tenido oportunidad de ver algo del Fórum Barcelona 2004?

BC: Solamente a través de las revistas, no lo he ido a visitar todavía. Dicen que hay una gran diferencia entre la realidad y lo mostrado en las publicaciones. Las fotografías parecen interesantes. El próximo viaje a Barcelona iré a verlo.

OB: Tu comentario me recuerda un artículo escrito después del seminario de Reno llamado *Learning from the Guggenheim* al cual tú también asististe. Lucy Lippard en su artículo "On Not Having Seen the Bilbao Guggenheim"¹ hablaba sobre el impacto de las imágenes arquitectónicas en las publicaciones. Lippard afirmaba que no estaba segura de haber ido o no a visitar el museo de Bilbao; ya que había visto tantas imágenes publicadas en los *media* que le dan la sensación de conocerlo muy bien y de haber estado allí.

BC: Naturalmente, puedes hacer un ejemplo de la representación. Este texto que mencionas es un claro ejemplo de la repercusión mediática contemporánea que es de lo que estábamos hablando.

OB: Si, Bilbao es uno de los claros ejemplos de ello y un tema sobre el que se ha escrito bastante; me parece interesante tu postura cuando reflexionas sobre la repercusión mediática del museo ya que no te centras solamente sobre Frank Gehry sino también incluyes al director de la Fundación Guggenheim, Thomas Krens.

BC: Siempre se habla de Gehry, pero en realidad en el efecto Bilbao hay dos arquitectos. Krens que produce a Gehry que produce el edificio. Nadie le hacía ni caso a Gehry después de su casa; hacía proyectos malísimos y no se le prestaba atención. El Guggenheim lo reinventó a Gehry y yo creo que Krens tuvo muchísimo que ver. El efecto Bilbao también es el efecto Gehry. El tema es que Bilbao construye el efecto Gehry.

OB: Si miramos hacia atrás en la historia, el manejo o incorporación de imágenes arquitectónicas en los medios para promover un evento urbanístico no es nuevo. En 1927

¹ Artículo publicado en *Learning From the Bilbao Guggenheim* (Guasch y Zulaika, 2005:59-69)

la Weissenhoffsiedlung de Stuttgart se dio a conocer a través de imágenes en revistas y atrajo a medio millón de personas. Fue de alguna manera una manera de mostrar la nueva forma de construir. ¿Tú piensas que los nuevos eventos o intervenciones urbanistas proponen otra alternativa constructiva?

BC: En la Weissenhoffsiedlung existió una situación interesante porque hubo un movimiento doble. Por un lado fue una arquitectura de exhibición, ya que lo construido era una exposición misma; y por otro lado era un material para ser fotografiado y multiplicado en los media. A diferencia de intervenciones contemporáneas donde suelen circular imágenes de proyectos no construidos, en la Weissenhoffsiedlung se utilizaban imágenes de lo ya construido. Precisamente había tan pocas cosas de arquitectura moderna, que precisamente era muy importante mostrarlo como lo que se había realizado. En realidad la exhibición en el museo de arte moderno, de lo que se llamó luego el 'Internation Style', también fue lo mismo, había un empeño en mostrar lo que ya se había construido.

OB: La situación de los media y la arquitectura ha cambiado desde la Weissenhoffsiedlung. Ese énfasis de la representación de lo existente y real ha dejado lugar a imágenes de proyectos arquitectónicos fantásticos e irreales. Relacionado a este tema Mark Wigley, en el año 2004, dio una conferencia en el ZKM (*Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie*) titulada "Architecture as Science Fiction". ¿Tú ves a la arquitectura de la misma manera, es decir como una producción de ciencia ficción?

BC: En cierto sentido sí. Precisamente estaba discutiendo esto los otros días con él. Siempre lo he visto así también, en realidad un proyecto es una proyección hacia el futuro. Ahora mismo estoy escribiendo un artículo sobre la casa del futuro en las ferias y exposiciones. La casa del futuro es ciencia ficción totalmente.

OB: Tú has escrito un artículo sobre este tema para el catálogo de la exhibición del Independent Group en la Tate.

BC: Sí, para el catálogo de esta exposición que hubo en Londres, escribí sobre la casa de los Smithson; ahora estoy escribiendo algo más general sobre la casa del futuro.

OB: A través de tus escritos propones una manera de ver la arquitectura desde la lente de los medios; has escrito sobre Loos, Le Corbusier, Mies, los Eames, y últimamente lo has hecho sobre Frank Gehry también. ¿Se puede aplicar sobre él esta mismo enfoque de análisis o postura crítica?

BC: ¿Tú lo has mirado? ¿Has leído el artículo?

OB: Sí, sí por eso te lo pregunto, es un poco diferente del resto.

BC: Sí es diferente, lo que es interesante de Frank Gehry es cómo se representa él a

si mismo como un arquitecto no teórico, que no se mete en eso, que no habla de su arquitectura pero en realidad habla una barbaridad y cuenta todas historias que acaban influenciando radicalmente en la manera en que se ve su trabajo, que es lo que me interesaba. Es como una historia de las múltiples interpretaciones de su trabajo que él en realidad haciéndose el tonto empuja. Estas interpretaciones de su trabajo 'la casa como psicoanálisis', 'la casa como *streak-tease*', 'la casa como un juego', 'la casa como arte', son una manera en realidad de envolver el trabajo y protegerlo de tal manera que el crítico no pueda nunca acercarse a él de tal manera que él está a salvo de la crítica de arquitectura. Es una manera diferente de actuar, el deja caer comentarios y lo que estaba intentando demostrar yo es que todo eso es a propósito.

OB: Piensas que los arquitectos contemporáneos son conscientes de la importancia de las imágenes arquitectónicas en los medios?

BC: La mayoría lo son, lo que pasa es que algunos son mas torpes que otros. Yo creo que Koolhaas es el más astuto de todos ellos en este sentido, como el equivalente de Le Corbusier en nuestros días, en el sentido de saber dónde colocarse y cómo.

OB: A propósito de Koolhaas, tú has escrito un artículo con él para la revista *Wired*.

BC: Si, entrevistamos a Martha Stewart, ahora justamente se está traduciendo al castellano.

OB: ¿Cómo fue esa experiencia, lo escribieron conjuntamente?

BC: Fuimos allí y la entrevistamos. En realidad era mucho más largo, para *Wired* acabó siendo dos páginas. La entrevista original es larguísima, estuvimos allí como 4 horas, fue muy interesante.

OB: La pregunta que me surge es casi obvia, ¿por qué Martha Stewart?, ¿qué relación tiene con la arquitectura?

BC: Martha Stewart es un personaje que ha influenciado la arquitectura americana de los últimos años más que cualquier otro arquitecto, en ese sentido es interesante mirarlo. Y de alguna manera, se puede decir que a pesar de todo es una especie de modernización en el sentido del 'editing' que llama ella; que es el eliminar todo aquello que es superfluo. Es una manera de modernizar. Se parece un poco a estas americanas de principios de siglo del 'Cientific Management'. En esa entrevista yo exploré sobretodo de que manera el trabajo de Martha Stewart podía alinearse con el de todas estas Christine Frederick o estos personajes del 'Cientific Managment of the Household' americano de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Y que también influenció muchísimo y nadie lo sabe en el Weissenhoffsiedlung. Esta organización de amas de casa, con la Dra. Herma Meyer que

estaba muy influenciada por la escuela americana, cortaron el bacalao mucho más de lo que nadie dice. Ellas eran las que le decían a los arquitectos lo que tenían que hacer. Por ejemplo la cocina de Judd, la que hace para la Weissenhoff, que está muy bien, está diseñada siguiendo sus recomendaciones. Él fue el único que se tomó en serio lo que decían estas mujeres y su cocina se publicó por todas partes. Y eso fue lo que me interesaba de Martha Stewart, yo creo que ella representa al equivalente de estas mujeres.

OB: ¿Y qué te pareció el hecho de trabajar con Rem?

BC: Bueno, Rem es amigo mío. Yo siempre hablo con él, nos conocemos muy bien. A mí me interesa su discurso y a él el mío. Nos hablamos de las cosas que escribimos y de lo que hacemos.

OB: El hecho de relacionarte con arquitectos y personalidades reconocidos como Rem Koolhaas o Martha Stewart te vincula con los medios de comunicación ¿Tú te ves a ti misma como parte de estos medios?, es decir, ¿Te reconoces como personaje mediático?

BC: Sí, es inevitable, mi trabajo está traducido a todas las lenguas, *Modernity and Publicity* está hasta en coreano y sueco. Aunque en el fondo sigo siendo un arquitecto que escribe, no he construido nada porque no me ha interesado nunca hacerlo. Soy parte de este grupo de arquitectos del siglo XX, toda una generación que estudió arquitectura pero luego se ha dedicado a escribir como Vidler, Frantom, Wigley. En Barcelona también, estaba Ingasi de Solá Morales o Quetlas.

OB: Me parece válido cerrar la entrevista con estos dos referentes. Muchas gracias Beatriz.

7 Entrevista a los arquitectos Carles Guri y Carolina Casajuana, 23 mayo 2006, Barcelona

OB: ¿Cuál fue la idea principal que utilizasteis para el montaje de la exhibición 'Habitar el Món'?

CG: La idea principal del comisariado de la exhibición consistió en un acercamiento al problema medioambiental, como nos relacionamos los humanos con el entorno, a partir de un acercamiento escalar. Se planteaban tres niveles planeta, urbano y local más una introducción y una conclusión.

OB: Entonces estas tres visiones se planteaban como un acercamiento gráfico y explicativo a través de imágenes de cómo se esta habitando el mundo?

CG: Sí, efectivamente. La idea era llevar el espectador a través de imágenes a su propio mundo, a su vida. Era un viaje donde uno se iba sumergiendo, primero se lo mostraba a nivel mundial, luego ciudad y por último su vida entendida como una red de sitios y puntos de energía que interactúan con el medio ambiente y el ecosistema.

OB: A nivel visual existió un elemento como soporte de imagen que se repetía varias veces y era el círculo, me puedes aclarar ¿por qué utilizasteis dicha figura?

CG: La implementación de la figura del cilindro era como un *zoom*, una manera de demarcar, de ver e imaginar. Todos los instrumentos que actúan como herramientas de la visión tienden a tener una forma circular como una lupa o un microscopio. Esta idea a la preparación del espacio de la exposición. El círculo se repite geométricamente desde el planeta hasta en elementos domésticos. Por este motivo partimos de esa figura, la circunferencia, para montar una topografía escalar, que sirvió para toda la exhibición. El diseño de la tipografía también se originó a partir de dicha base.

OB: ¿Qué material visual habéis implementado en el montaje para generar esa topografía visual?

CG: Combinamos dos tipos de imágenes. Por un lado se utilizaron videos mediáticos con referencias medioambientales que incorporase en el ruido de los *mass-media*. Eran documentales basados en lo que cadenas como CNN, BBC o Alhesiras, mostraban de desastres o catástrofes ecológicas como el Prestiege. Y por otro lado se exponían imágenes fijas, de El Roto. Ya habíamos trabajado con este artista plástico anteriormente y nos gusta sus capacidad de reflexión gráfica y respuesta de opinión que produce a través de su producción artística, por eso lo llamamos y le pedimos colaborar con nosotros.

OB: Cuando se te realizó el encargo para la dirección técnica del montaje de 'Habitar el Món' ¿Qué imagen se te pidió transmitir?

CG: La consigna fue muy clara, se intentaba generar una exposición que apelara a las

sensaciones; era más una muestra de sensaciones que de contenidos pensada para una afluencia masiva de público. Me acuerdo que nos llamaron y dijeron: “necesitamos un gran Dragon Can” un espectáculo que la gente quiera visitar y consumir en cinco minutos.

OB: Este requerimiento visual por parte de los organizadores se conecta con algunos de otros montajes expositivos que hayáis realizado?

CG: Debo decir que no, esta fue el primer trabajo con la idea de expo temática de gran evento y repercusión internacional. Generalmente trabajamos con intervenciones y montajes de muestras artísticas adaptándonos a los contenidos de la obra. Lo que sí tratamos de hacer siempre es la utilización de los mínimos elementos posibles. En este sentido se vincula con una muestra de Gaudí que hicimos en la Catedral de Palma, donde colgábamos solamente unas letras con luces para generar un recorrido visual.

OB: He leído que en ‘Habitar el Món’ habéis hecho algo parecido racionalizando los elementos del montaje, no es así?

CG: Sí, nos fijamos como objetivo al estar trabajando sobre una exposición medioambiental, utilizar elementos reutilizables para el montaje.

OB: Es lo mismo que elementos reciclados, me puedes explicar la diferencia entre reciclados y reutilizados?

CG: Los elementos reutilizados son aquellos que después de la muestra pueden volver a ser utilizados como están, en cambio los reciclados, como el caso de una botella de vidrio, tiene que volver a la planta, ser destruida para luego generar a partir del cristal otra botella nueva. Nosotros utilizamos andamios, como soporte de las imágenes y como límites espaciales, que fueron usados para la función que fueron creados. Ese uno de nuestros principios básicos de cómo tratar a los elementos y a la materia sin crear residuos no reproducibles. por ejemplo no ensuciamos materiales, la implementamos tal como es, no pintamos la madera. Nos parecía coherente llevar la idea medioambiental al montaje de la muestra y no tratarla como algo meramente superficial de las imágenes. Buscamos la coherencia entre el material expuesto y su soporte físico.

OB: Muchas gracias por tu tiempo y la explicación sobre el montaje de Habitar el Món.

**8 Entrevista realizada por L. Lyons a Cindy Sherman,
19 enero 1982. Transcripción de cintas. Archivo del
museo Walker Art Center, Miniápolis**

LL: Where were you born and when?

CS: In 1954 in Glen Ridge, New Jersey.

LL: Where did you study?

CS: I went to school at the college in Buffalo but I didn't really get that much education from them it was mostly from having Halwalls up there and becoming involved in alternative space and the artist that came up, talking to them, and finding out more about contemporary things that were going on right then.

LL: Who came through?

CS: Everybody, I mean we had every young or aspiring artist in the 70's probably came up there at some point. At least, if they were in New York, they did. A lot of performance people, video, some music, not that much. I don't think it was that big right then and I don't know we were just starving for anything so almost everyone came up and but I guess mostly we were interested in those closer to our age or at least who were most experimental with what we were doing.

LL: What kind of work were you doing at that point?

CS: I think that is right about when I started taking photographs and it was out of some kind of response to a project that a teacher gave me and I decided to take pictures of myself for some project where I would do this transformation from my own face into this other character. So, it was a series of thirty-six pictures and then for some reason I just kept doing that and I don't even know why or why I decided to continue using myself I mean because at the time a lot of the projects that we were assigned had to do with ourselves, the class, the individual so I think that's why kept using myself and also I really was so happy with the first thing I ever did I decided that this was just a kind of really neat thing to do playing with makeup, costumes and wigs with putting it on film; and it was something that I used to do when I was a kid for play. I had this suitcase that was filled with all these old gowns that we'd find in junk stores that didn't fit. Because I was too small, but I would put on my mother's high heels and play dress up. So for some reason it looked more serious on film so I decided to keep doing it. At the time I was most interested in just transforming my own face so I was playing with the make up like a canvas, like in paints, trying to alter looking. I'd look some photographs say of something in a magazine and completely try to make my face look like this other model's. Only what would happen is that the make up would added on to my bone structure, would distort my face so much that as soon as I moved my face away from the angle that I was trying to get in the photograph I looked like I had some really kind of monstrous mask on because of all the shadowing that was there. So I was more playing around with how that aspect of ugliness-like the monster's that way that can be created from using this makeup that's normally supposed to make you beautiful.

LL: Were these pictures in black and white or color?

CS: Yeah, this is all in black and white.

LL: Were they in fashion magazine?

CS: Some of it, that was just one little set I did and where I was taking covers of magazines and was trying to look like these women on the covers and superimposing my face. But then before that I was doing, I was just doing fantasy faces...like men, I would try to look like these construction workers and they were just head shots, kind of almost like a photo booth but printed larger and I would do old people. I just did like a whole series of different types of people and then I would have these characters turn into other character so that that was also some series of putting makeup on top of other makeup. Then I started playing with costumes for some strange reason. I think I wanted to do... I think I did a project of a paper doll and I was the paper doll and it was just this real mundane thing of taking photos of my clothes and making these little toy things and from that I wanted to do an animated film of this doll that came to life. For the film, I took a whole roll, two rolls of film of different movements and then cut them up and then the pieces of these cut outs became much more interesting then the film ever became, but I kept doing these series of a roll or two of different characters with costumes and then it just got more and more elaborated where I would put wigs on and make up and then do little tableaux on the wall with different characters and just started playing with the wall space and the way that when you cut out these figures the could be combined so that it looked more realistic even though it was all me it looked like there were other people there just touching each other or I would play with this perspective of making some smaller to look like children or somebody that was in the distance and these were cut outs that were stuck on the wall.

LL: How large were they?

CS: The biggest one was maybe 14". The size had a lot to do with either whether they were a man or there was supposed to be something in the foreground show some kind of like zoom-in but most of them were around 8-10" so I just did the whole gamut of different people like that.

LL: So this was over the course of the year?

CD: This was, I guess, within two years before I came to New York and I was so much more interested in these different whole variety of different characters and tableaux I did a lot of men, then which I never do any more and it was set up like I was making a film. I would have to figure out the whole structure beforehand and then shoot it. Shoot each character in each scene which is kind of interesting to me because as I would wind up doing maybe

everything in about two or four weeks and just working all the time and cutting them out was also time consuming but it was just this concentrated effort that I think I liked so much that I've kept to so that I don't even know when I work its just like a month at a time then I don't work any more.

LL: You said you were involved with Hallwalls. Who else was up there at that point?

CS: Well Robert Longo and Charlie Clough started it and Robert was going to school when I met him and he had a studio in this building that Charlie had a studio in and there was literally this big room that they thought that it would be a nice place to show their work mostly and fellow artist friends work. But, then to get money, funding money, we started bringing up people from New York and actually we rarely showed our work except maybe once or twice a year and we got more interested in showing other people's work.

LL: Of the people who came up, who did you think were most influential and most interesting to you?

CS: Well at that time I was really interested in Susie Lake's work I don't know if you knew her...

LL: No

CS: She was from Montreal and I think I was interested because she had done a series where she would put makeup on her face. So I was mostly just curious because we were doing kind of similar things and she was a little older than I am, and you know, already had somewhat a reputation in Canadian magazines. But in the long run she didn't have much. It wasn't really that ... it didn't sustain with me because we both went in different directions with our work. Also the reason she made... I think she had different reasons for doing what she did because.... I think I was trying to get away from what makeup does in terms of making some attractive. I was trying to play with how it just abstracts people or can make people look very unattractive and she was doing a series where she would just try to look very glamorous, I think I got disinterested.

LL: What about the cinematic aspects of your work, was there anybody who came up that was influential in that direction?

CS: There were a lot of people that... performance artists may be that were very theatrical and I think that was very influential on me. When Vito was up, its very inspiring to meet somebody like that when you are kind of starving for something and there were a number of people who did very interesting theatrical kinds of things. Robin Winters... Almost everybody actually that came up did performances. It became a very theatrical thing. I mean Willoughby Sharpe was up there Michael McClard, Jon Borofsky, Chris Burden, Robert Irwin. There

were a lot of people but I didn't really get that involved in talking to them and picking their brains the way a lot of the other people did. I think a lot of it had to do with being quiet and shy and really feeling kind of stupid in terms of art history and their history.

LL: So, you didn't really have a strong art history background.

CS: No, not really. I took the required courses but I just never found it very interesting. I think part of the problem was that I never traveled and a lot of my friends had done traveling and they could see the stuff first hand so I never felt very academic in reading or studying.

LL: Did you look at a lot of Hollywood movies?

CS: Yeah, not consciously I don't remember consciously studying movies but I must have and I think definitely have a vocabulary about movies that my friends don't have so I must have been paying more attention than normal people would or something. I don't know. I always.. since I wasn't really interested in reading that much, I would look at pictures so I think I was always studying pictures of people in the street.

LL: Magazines and newspapers?

CS: Magazines and newspapers, even books. The best books for me are like those coffee table books because they are all pictures. When I first came to New York I bought every Hollywood film or movie kind of book I could find. The more pictures the better and I would just look through it and soak it all in.

LL: W'e've jumped a little bit you were making these cut out pieces and was it about that time you then moved down to New York?

CS: Yes in fact, it was '77 and after being involved with Hallwalls for three years or whatever.. It was at that point, five years, I think people were beginning to sense, not really boredom. But people needed, I needed a change.

I was living with Robert and so we just both came to this conclusion that we had had enough of being in Buffalo. We were ready to move to New York and be right in the heart of things and it was like we realized that Buffalo was although I as afraid to move to NY because of the problems involved. I was really intimidated by money and all that stuff. I just realized that that's going to happen wherever we go. So that when we came to New York and at the same time, my work was also at a very strange point because I didn't know what I wanted to do and I was tired of cutting out and doing other things and I was ready to change . I needed something like a move to force me to change. Somehow I really found that moving to New York has a lot to do with my work changing for some reason I don't know if it was just coincidence or what.

LL: So by the time you got here what kind of work were you doing?

CS: I wasn't doing anything. I had done the last cut-out piece which was really completely different from the other work. It was just something to do for a show up in Buffalo and that was several months before we came down here and around that time I kept on thinking of what can I do so I won't have to cut up these photographs and I can still enjoy doing this kind of work and I think after being in new York for a couple of months, somebody was showing.. actually Robert and I were over at David Salle's place because he lived near right then and I really didn't know him very well then but he had these movie stills. The were sleazy, not like fifties or sixties. Soft porn, almost, you know, women with a lot of makeup, garish looking makeup. I actually started things that's kind of neat. Maybe I could make something like that. I thought it would solve the problems of cutting out the photographs and also if I had my self in it, the only problem at that point was trying to make it look that person wasn't alone. So I was trying to think how I could take photographs that look like there is somebody else in the photograph or just out side the frame so that's when the whole drama thing started coming to play in those stills and...

LL: Are those the works that are unidentified film stills?

CS: Unidentified. That 's even better that untitled, because they are untitled but unidentified sounds better.

LL: So it's really those first stills that you had seen at Davis's and looking through his coffee table books that got you...

CS: Yeah, I was almost afraid to admit to anyone that it was at David Salle's...

LL: The truth is out.

CS: But yes, I think that's when I started thinking that's that was a neat idea and I don't know what he... I'm certain that he made drawings from them so it was kind of strange.

LL: Had you have any training in photography?

CS: Yes, however I failed my first photography course and then had to repeat it when I had this teacher who gave these more interesting projects. She was more concerned with people's idea rather than the technique so I felt a little freer because the reason I failed the first course was because I was so intimidated by these technique things that weren't really very well explained to me. So a lot of it was self-taught just as I went along as I needed to know something. So at first time I didn't even care about print quality and since I was

cutting up these photographs any way it didn't matter and I enjoyed the fact that I didn't care. I almost reveled in it thinking "fuck all these photographers"

LL: Did you have any training in the history of photography.

CS: Yeas I did take a course but that again....

LL: There wasn't anybody in the history of photography that interested you?

CS: There really, well, I mean I could mention people.... There is ... have you seen the new Picture magazine?

LL: Yeah

CS: That one that I'm in. All those people in it...

LL: Oh no, I haven't seen that.

CS: Well actually they weren't influencing me at the time but later on people like fashion photographers that also did their own work. Geroge Platte Lynes and who else? I can't remember those names

LL: Is George Hoyningen-Huene in that issue?

CS: I don't know

LL: Or Hordst, or any of those people?

CS: No, actually the problem with me is that I never look up these people but I will see one thing of theirs and relish it like...oh, what is this guy's name...

LL: We can look at the picture magazine later and then talk about that. It was really the Hollywood aesthetic that you were interested in?

CS: Hollywood r, yeah, actually I was so bored with all the other kinds of photography. It just did not interest me at all.

LL: What about other artists know primarily artists as opposed to being photographers. I mean more conceptually oriented people such as Wegman and Robert Cumming, Are those people of any interest to you?

CS: Yes in fact. Up in Buffalo, the videotapes of Wegman. I guess Baldessari was up there and did something... People like that they were real interesting to me but not really influential as far as what I was doing. I don't know for some reason I always felt that I was just doing this girlish thing so they had nothing to do with it...

LL: That is interesting. We should talk more about that later. Now let's talk about the untitled film stills. How did you begin on this? Did you plot out scenes very carefully, did you plot out a narrative and then focus on one?

CS: No, the first one, it was mostly kind of an experiment. I just thought I would try it. What I was thinking of doing was taking me type of character and doing about ten different scenes that would look like they were from ten different movies of that one character's lifetime. So I was thinking, there was this blonde character, this blonde wig I have. There were different wigs, but she was a blonde. So sometimes I would make her look younger and sometimes a little older but always the same face, and I was kind of amazed that they actually turned out as well as they did. I was experimenting and I couldn't believe that I could have that kind of control and do it. The lighting... it was so easy. And I thought of making movies is so complicated that I couldn't possibly imitate something like that on film but for all this time it has worked out. Of course now it is becoming more complicated

LL: So in these early ones you had one character that was an actress or you would appear in different...

CS: Yes

LL: But there was never any real narrative

CS: No, there is no narrative

LL: Do you identify the characters beyond being a "blond" a "brunette"?

CS: No I think the only reason I picked a blonde for the first one was because at the time I had brown hair so I think at the time I just wanted to go as far from my self as I could.

LL: "You have only one life to live, why not live it as a blonde"?

CS: So, but that was the only time I did one character in several different shots.

LL: Did you take the pictures yourself? What kind of camera were you using? Can you explain all that?

CS: Yes. Just a *Minolta* that I had gotten for my photo classes in school.

LL: A 35 mm camera.

CS: I just shot black and white. Black and white film. In fact that first roll of film ...Because I was experimenting I had no idea if it was even going to turn out. I reticulated the film which means I used hotter chemicals and water so that the emulsion actually cracks. But so there is this really forced looking grain which wasn't too successful because... it's such a pattern. It almost looks like...some people say: "Oh you made a mistake" but I just wanted it to look really grainy and cheap. As cheap as it could possibly look, like a movie still. Sometime I would make them as contrasty as possible just to make them look really junky but... what did I do after that? After that time I was shooting right in the place where I lived and I lived in a pretty big place and I had a lot of furniture so I just kept using everything around and creating these miniature stages for myself to work within. So right away I loved that control that I had of doing everything myself and being kind of left alone and not really any pressure. And then, after I did several of those, or after I felt I exhausted that place, I started moving outside, which worked but right away I realized that I needed some else to take the pictures. So Robert started taking pictures for me and I had no idea if that was going to work because I also felt. "how am I going to trust his sensibility?" .."to explain what I want?" I didn't know how to approach this. I would just tell him to do this close up and "now why don't you it farther here". You know it was just like playing around again, and that worked out also. I've since tried to use other people as well and some times it works

LL: So who are the other people who have taken shots?

CS: Helene has and my father and my niece and the I think my friend Nancy Dwyer took the first one that I did outside.

LL: What other kind of characters have you developed? For example, in looking at the pictures I could identify certain types. There seems to be young career girls who come to the big city in one shot: there seems to be a kind of floozy housewife, a student type. Did you identify these characters?

CS: Sometimes, yeah, actually at that time that I was really in the midst of beginning of all those I was busy looking at most of those movies magazines and buying most of them so I guess I was. There were a lot of them that were based in European actresses like there is one that was based specifically on Brigitte Bardot, a young Brigitte Bardot.

LL: What were these reticulated ones taken?

CS: These are '77, yeah. The end of '77. So I was just thinking of different corners of my house and this is the first one I ever did.

LL: A woman coming through a doorway.

CS: Yeah, but eventually this stuff I brought to a show in Buffalo right after I moved and I lost the negatives. This was the first outdoor shot, I guess.

LL: Where is that taken, this is a woman standing in a sliding doorway in a slip and stockings.

CS: This was out in Long Island at Robert's parents summer house.

LL: Who is this in the front with the hat on?

CS: That's Nancy Dwyer. It is the only that has somebody else in the picture.

LL: Where is the one based in Brigitte Bardot?

CS: There was a Book, I guess I had gotten at the time, that was like a picture history of all her films and up until this point I had no idea of any of these European. I mean to me they were underground films. Brigitte Bardot was just a name of some sexy actress whose first pictures were in the nude and I just grew up thinking Oh, that naughty but then all these pictures were so tame and there was something else that just so...some kind of quality, just was her sex appeal I guess. I found that a lot of the other European women like Sophia Loren and Monica Vitti all these different people just had a different sensibility of what was glamorous or appealing and it wasn't like the true Hollywood version and I particularly liked Brigitte Bardot when she was really young so this was kind of based on that a long wig. Then there was one that was...These weren't really based on anything although people thought this was a young Marilyn Monroe but it wasn't.

LL: Sitting in a window. I have to identify it for the tape.

CS: No, This one was a kind of Italian movie, may be Sophia Loren, Monica Vitti type. Actually I was trying to look like this woman in the picture because that was just some movie still that came with the picture set. This one I was trying to look like Jeanne Moreau type.

LL: This is a woman sitting in an armchair. So then you started moving outdoors when you had exhausted the possibilities of indoors. Robert took these that we are looking at now?

CS: Yeah, it was another experiment, where I just took about three different costumes, makeup and wigs and the camera in his van and we just drove around and I would say okay why don't we stop here, I'd change in the back of the van. He'd take these pictures but I mean I had really idea. I think I chose these costumes in thinking of the different types.

LL: This one, the closeup, I've always thought of this as young girl comes to the big city. Is that the kind of thing you had in mind?

SC: No not at all. I think I would take a costume and just decide to try to do something with that costume and not really to think about what the final affect was going to be. I would think "with this costume, I should wear this kind of hat" and "with this one I would have this kind of hair" and then once I was all dressed up the I would try to think where would I be so we went to a business district, actually it was right at the bottom of Manhattan, this is the Customs House and so I was trying to look like a professional, you know, type of character.

LL: What about this woman in the dark wig?

CS: By the pier? Yeah

LL: Is she supposed to be a specific?

CS: No, she wasn't.

LL: What are you wearing?

CS: A really old nightshirt, I guess.

LL: This looks like an escapee from a hospital.

CS: That was actually... that group CoLab was having a show. It was a doctor and dentist show and, I had done one project for it that was these really corny portraits, they were literally like yearbook looking pictures of nurses and doctors or interns, and then O also decided I wanted something like this in my hallway so I had a friend who was visiting me from Buffalo take these, that was Fiane Britello, that was the other person who took pictures, and we were just fooling around and they turned out really interesting. But they

were different from all the other work that they didn't really, they weren't really responded to because they were so like psychiatric looking, but people have said that it ties more in with the work I'm doing now..

LL: There is different kind of tension, more drama in these pictures.

There is one thing that strikes me about a lot of... not the very earliest ones but the middle group that we are just looking at, is just how banal the images and how very little emotion is expressed in them.

CS: Yeah, well I didn't want anything to be obvious so I was trying to leave as much to the viewer as I possibly could so I was more interested in setting up the environment, just being a piece of information rather than the whole thing being about that character. So then I moved and that's when I did these few pictures. It seems like every time I move I would do, I mean it is true I think that when I'm so bored I need to move. Every place I go I would take my camera and try to take pictures.

LL: Now interior shots, was somebody else taking these?

CS: These were taken in Phoenix, actually this one was taken in Flagstaff, I was visiting my parents who live out there and so we took pictures around Phoenix and then we went for a two weeks tour when we were staying at Flagstaff in a cabin and some of them my father took and some of them I took. Actually he took the outdoor ones.

LL: Now this picture of you standing by the fireplace with the Tetons or whatever in the painting about you....who took that picture?

CS: I took that one. It was a tripod shot. I think he just took the outdoor ones, but that was pretty controlled with him. I would set up the camera on the ripod and he just had to click the shutter.

LL: Are all these pictures we're looking at out West?

CS: Yes, these are the ones my niece took in the pool. Then these were in California, my friend Nancy Dwyer was teaching out there and housesitting in this nice Bauhaus type of house...

LL: There is a woman in a short stripped dress standing in front of an open bar.

CS: This was back in New York. This is like the beginning of the...the woman, blonde woman with the lamp, beginning of the last time I really did any of these black and whites..

LL: This is one of you sitting on the tree trunk. That's a place called the Mittens,

CS: Yeah, Monument Valley.

LL: Let's go back to this in Monument Valley. In that case, it looks like a terrible corny family travel picture and the fact of the matter is that you were out traveling with your folks. Is that what you had in mind with this?

CS: No I don't know. Again every day when we would go out driving or sight-seeing I would pack a suitcase with a couple of costumes and think of that character and maybe make notes of where I thought, what I was looking for out the window so it was kind of giving me something I would tell my father to pull over and do it so... I did have things in mind beforehand but not about.... When I did this I wasn't thinking of how it was going to look, except of some kind of effect. I can't really describe it...I wasn't thinking to make it look like a corny home picture,

LL: Now we're back in New York and the blonde reappears. But she isn't the same character as in the very first pictures. Does she have an identity, who is she supposed to be?

CS: I guess she was supposed to be look kind of German, mantroly... it is like a war shot. Actually that was an old WAC uniform and an old army coat. Some of the outdoor ones were specifically, like that one with the coat was, in the rain,...There was this street with a lamppost and I wanted a foggy, rainy kind of...but it didn't quite turn out the way I had envisioned it.

LL: We can go back to the things that appear and reappear that have to do with the recent work and there are a lot of women on beds, a lot of limpid, sexual scenes. They are somewhere in between movie stills and skin magazines. Earlier you brought up this thing, that you were doing this kind of girlish thing and not relating to what any of your male peers were up to...

CS: I just felt that the whole idea of putting makeup on, wigs was just something that just seemed....i mean people think I must be narcissistic and exhibitionist whatever, and it's wired to compare myself to people that are real painter or sculpture who are really doing things that seemed much more important because they get outside of themselves, where I feel like I'm kind of almost so wrapped up in myself, with the work... and yet I don't see that way. But I know that because people know that it's me that they think that must be it. It's strange and I always have this funny feelings about it mad I never meant... when I do these I never think of what the effect is. I think it just turns out that I just have to look at the contract sheet. And then I know what I wanted but I never think them as trying .. I never think about trying to make a sexy shot. I think I would at the time... I might have, at the times reverted to a cheesecake shot because it seemed a perfect image for whatever that character was, you know. Like she just had to be in that kind of position.

LL: On the other hand, weren't you trying to make any commentary about those kind of pictures that exist in magazines?

CS: I was in a way. I was trying to show the vulnerability of the women who are doing those kinds of things or the women who are really caught up in that so I think I was really trying to another side of those kinds of pictures that were much more vulnerable and scary and something that would make the viewer feel more sorry for that person and make that kind of role seem what it was which wasn't a kind of derogatory kind of role. But I mean I wasn't really trying to make any kind of statement. That was just my personal feeling toward it. It wasn't trying to be political.

LL: The pictures, the ones that seem specifically like film stills and the ones that seem like cheesecake shots out of a magazine always look a little "off". They always look a little like the outtakes not what actually would be used for or in preparation for the final shot. How many shots do you make to get a final image?

CS: Gosh, in the early days it seemed like I could get maybe 3-5 shots on one roll which was an amazing rate, I mean most real photographers would brag about how they would take roll after roll to get shot which is actually what is happening to my work now at that time it came so easy, maybe because I was experimenting with something that was very new to me so there were much more possibilities with making different generalizations and I guess it was easier..

LL: You were getting this amazing rate.

CS: It was easier to pick out generalizations about that scene and I guess that is what the work is about, making many generalizations with as many different kinds of the characters as I could dream up and it was just easier all around to work at that point.

LL: Do you ever write about these characters?

CS: No.

LL: Is there any other kind of preparation aside for gathering the... do you go out and look for a particular type of clothing?

CS: I used to, not a particular type but I used to spend a lot of time going through thrift stores and buying something just because I thought it would be a great costume and at the time since I was kind of wrapped up in nostalgia it was really easy and fun to do; at the time it was also wasn't the fashion yet so it was easier to find stuff very cheap and find stuff that

looked so weird and outdated whereas nowadays it's so "in" that it's not worth doing any kind of stud like that anymore.

LL: You said you were so caught up in nostalgia, what was it, the fifties?

CS: Because I was... I think what first interested me in that era was the really outlandish, garish makeup and I mean this is in the middle 70's, when everyone was trying to be as natural as possible, with no makeup at all. I just thought that was so amazing that women would harness themselves up in these pointy bras and stockings and curlers and do all this makeup and all this stuff. I just thought that was what I wanted to play around with those kind of restrictive type costumes and clothing and so that's why it was the fifties and sixties.

LL: How many of this untitled films stills did you do?

CS: I think there are about sixty.

LL: Sixty, and at what point did you feel that you had run through the possibilities?

CS: Yeah, I didn't at the time realize that that was what happened but there was some point at that I couldn't; it was a lot of things. I didn't feel inspired anymore to do these because I felt the more I did the more repetitive it began to get and basically I think that I had just exhausted all the different generalizations that I had been playing with. All the different kind of characters and different kinds of situations. Even the emotions seem to get a little repetitive. I mean basically I don't seem to be doing anything or my expressions are almost no expression. I mean it is funny how I really don't smile. I'm not frowning, I find that I can't express too much emotion because then it looks too corny. I think that there is one shot way back here where I actually end like weeping and its like a really corny shot. Also what happened at the time is that it was a problem of living where I lived and I have used up the different possible situations in that place for shots I also got tired of doing location shots and shooting outdoors because I couldn't stand running around changing in some doorway and people looking at me like I'm real weird and just the rushing around of that just drove me nuts. That's when I started doing color but I didn't really know how to do color because when I was in Arizona the first time, I had done some. Accidentally my niece had taken some shots of me in that pool with colored film and they looked... The problem with all those photographs was that they looked like a straight photograph; they didn't have any...there was no distance. It looked like a real time shot. It didn't look like a real old photograph, it didn't look like it was from a movie; it looked staged and I don't know why black and white film worked better but any way the way I solved that problem of getting color was the rear screen projection.

LL: So you started doing things with rear screen projection, that must have been complicated, how did you set those things up?

CS: I had to rent 9 x 12 foot screen. I didn't even measure my place. I can't believe I was so lucky that it fit in, literally within inches on my ceiling and just about a foot on one side of the wall that I could get behind it.

LL: So what are the backgrounds?

CS: There are slides, some that I had bought in Arizona and the I have taken several dozen rolls or so of film I think again in Arizona of scenes that I thought would be like a background. I really had to think about something that wasn't really interesting that had a horizon perhaps in it or where it would look like it would be in scale if someone were standing on the road or whatever. So that was actually fun because it was the first time that I had even been able to take pictures while I was looking through the camera and just have fun clicking away. It's so much nicer than complicated set ups. So I had taken all these slides and then the problem with this work was that I had a regular projector. As a result, the light concentration was right in the center of the screen, so you can see where it got darker all around the edges in some of the ones that were farther away, and ideally I wanted, since I had a 9 x 12 foot screen. I wanted to be able to fill up the whole screen so I could be standing almost within the image. But I could never go that because it got so dark around the edges that I mostly concentrated on these closeups that I could get that area.

LL: How many of these are there?

CS: I think there are ten, maybe, no there are fourteen.

LL: do you try to do a different character for each?

CS: Yes, and also at the same time I was trying to get away from any kind of nostalgic look and I was trying to use less makeup. I was bored at that time with so much makeup change, you know taking two hours to put makeup on and trying to look so completely different. I was sick of trying to look different all the time so I tried to use as little makeup as possible. Some of them were successful for doing what I wanted to do for that and some of them weren't. I mean there were some of them that do look nostalgic and some of them do look very made up or pretty and posed and I was also trying in some of them to look more androgynous. Sometime it worked.

Obviously that one's androgynous and that one definitely isn't.

LL: Are there all outdoor scenes?

CS: Yes I think they are. This was shot, the bar scene was in from within a bar looking out.

LL: So you would have this rear screen projector and you would stand in front of it and you would just set up the shot and use a tripod...?

CS: Yeah. It was more the...the lighting was more the problem because since I had to be so close to the screen to get screen image I had to really balance the lighting on myself so that was really the only problem. Setting up the camera and the tripod again was not a problem or taking pictures. But sometimes staying within the frame was a problem.

LL: OK, so those were made when in 1980, 1981?

Cs: 1980, yeah

LL: You did fourteen of those and was it the technical problems that were too overwhelming? Were you not pleased with the results?

CS: Well, not actually I wasn't. when I had the first show here at Metro I wasn't at all pleased with the show and I mean like I got a lot of compliments but I didn't know what to think of that work, because I know I wasn't successful for the reasons that I wanted to make the work and also because of all of the technical problems, so I kind of abandoned that temporarily.

LL: Aside from the technical problems, what weren't you satisfied with in the work?

CS: The fact that some people still thought that they were nostalgic and that some of them did look... some people thought that maybe they were glamorous. I really wanted to look different but without using the makeup and I got very sick of seeing so much of myself, you know, recognizing my face. It almost looked like it was the same person in every one with a different wig on and I don't like that so, I wasn't too pleased and now there are several of them that I really do like but...

LL: I think the Bar scene looks particularly successful and this image.

CS: The girl on the bicycle

LL: Oh is that a bicycle?

CS: Yeah, because that was just the bars on the bicycle.

LL: Ok, so from there did you move right on into the work that we are talking about using for this show?

CS: Yes but it took about... I think it was about a year later that I actually started figuring out what I was going to be doing. I had been playing around with different things. I started to use black and white again. I started doing tests with colored film that were just straight portraits where I was trying to use lighting and filters on the lights to get effects without using any makeup and a lot of those portraits. I actually liked but they looked very posed and I would never show them because they looked just like portraits. Some of them also were very glamorous looking and the lighting. They wound up looking like they could be in, you know, fashion magazines. Except it was glamorous, not that I used a lot of makeup or anything, it was just something about the lighting and the pose that was like a typical model shot I don't know. They were very weird. But that fooling around with that stuff and playing around with colored lights lead me into this work which was based on a project for *Artforum*, and yet it was also the timely project for me because starting to think about this project made me combine the ideas that I had been working on with these other face portraits without any makeup on and trying to make it look a full figure. Using my figure, my full figure and also doing this project solved all these little things. At first when I was trying to think of ideas for *Artforum*, it was completely different than the result of it which is the slide that Ingrid has now. It is completely different because I think I was thinking about my full figure having to be within the frame and they didn't work out at all. They were very boring and when I finally decided that I could consider this space the way portraits were you know they were close-up. Part of my head or arms or legs were chopped off. They were still presented like a portrait but it had the drama of the other photographs because there was more implied. I was playing with the wigs to make them look different by wetting them, washing them and putting them on wet and then the wet from the wig would start running down my face and it would look like sweat so I started spritzing water on my arms and just trying all these different effects with the lighting and with these little things that I would do that wasn't like makeup but it made it transformed.

LL: Some kind of artifice.

CS: Yeah, Then it started thinking about, after I did a couple of these, then I started thinking about this space that my body wasn't in so I would think about what things to put in the background or little hints of something else that was right there, a piece of paper or part of a rug that would be coming in.

LL: This started because you had originally proposed to *Artforum* to do a centerfold, was that it?

CS: Well, they asked me to do something and I thought that I'd like to do a centerfold and at the time I think Ingrid particularly liked the idea because she thought politically that it would be an interesting thing to do because I would present a centerfold differently, like I would make fun of it. But I wasn't thinking so much about doing a parody of a Playboy centerfold

as much as just using that space where you could rip it out of the magazine and put this picture up on the wall. I wasn't really thinking about some statement of the way women are used in these situations.

LL: So you made of these ultimately and each one is a different character?

CS: Yes. Some of them look, they could be, you could say that these two were even the same character but it wasn't meant to be and that again is because I wasn't using that much makeup. A lot of these, with the makeup that I did put on, it was not too. I mean, it was the only way I could get away from looking too madeup is to look completely grungy or something like that. Instead, I would try to...I would do a shot and say I want to look a little different. So I would try to put makeup on and start putting makeup on and take the shot and it would look just like I had tons of makeup on and ii realized that you can't do conventional makeup and look like you are un madeup so I would have to put like all this black stuff and brown stuff under my eyes,, no eyeliner or anything like that because it would just look, it read as eyeliner. I was starting to use shadow or something to make my eyelids glisten or sometimes I would put Vaseline on my face and I don't know different things with shadows and coloring to make it look like maybe I hadn't slept much or I was very dirty or sweaty so it was like different kinds of concerns that were more interesting to me as far as the makeup at this point.

LL: Does there seem to be, there are a lot of differences between this work and the other like in the color, scale but also the subject matter. You said you didn't set out to make a parody of a Playbboy centerfold. They are not glitzy enough to be Playboy. They are more banal, they are almost like the kind of shot, I don't know who would take them, that's part of the question, but there, is also much more of a narrative implied, because of certain props that you have pulled into it, to some of them like the woman lying by a telephone, the suggestion that's she's...waiting for Mr. Right to call. I wish I had pictures of all of them in front of me so I could talk more specifically. The emotions are much more stronger in some of them too than in previous work. There is that one of you hanging out in the other room where you're kind of gazing. I mean I can't tell if you are gazing into a firelight. It looks like a woman sitting in front of a fireplace.

CS: Yeah, it was supposed to.

LL: There are others.

CS: Yeah.

LL: Like the suggestion that there is somebody else in the room, or you are waiting for somebody or somebody has done something to you. Did you try to work yourself up into a particular kind of emotional state?

CS: Yes, I think that's what happens. I mean I don't try to do it but once I start taking the pictures I work with a mirror in front of me so that I can see what I'm doing and I found that was really important and I think that was one of the reasons I felt a problem occurred with the earlier color stuff because I didn't have a mirror and it's much easier to understand what kind of pictures you want when I can see it. Obviously, if I'm standing in front of a screen that has a slide on it and I'm not looking at the screen but looking into a camera or looking at the rest of my house, that is in front of me, I can't really understand what I'm supposed to be doing. You know it is easier to just look right into the scene and say "oh of course I should like this "or maybe" I'll try this "or maybe" I'll do it this way .

LL: So now you're posed so that you see what you've got in the camera or roughly what you are getting in the camera?

CS: Yeah, but that, doing that is like watching someone else and controlling that person. I don't see myself and I think that's when I really begin to get into those moods or character. I mean that probably has a lot to do with why I feel reluctant to use other people because I just get into it so much that I think that really contributes to the and result when I actually... I mean sometimes it feels really fun and amazing to actually look in a mirror and feel like it's actually a different person. It's really neat.

LL: Are these people all different aspects of your personality?

CS: I don't think so. They might be. A lot of these were real adolescent types and I think that yeah, they are not fantasies, maybe they are types.

LL: Can we talk about each one specifically maybe that will be helpful? There is a woman, with a bluish cast. I can't see what she's doing in the picture.

CS: Well I wanted to do...one of the first ones I had done was this one, a beam of light that was coming through a crack in a doorway and I liked what that lighting did so basically I was trying to redo it or update it or something and so that was what this one was based on this light as if it was coming through a crack in a doorway, as if someone had just opened the doorway to like check in this person that was locked up or maybe they were just sleeping. So that's what that one is based on.

LL: Where you trying to portray someone of a specific age? I mean do you think...I'm trying to figure out the way you work. What goes through your mind while you're putting these together. I mean, were you trying to think of somebody who led particular kind of life?

CS: I guess so. Like this one, the first thing I did was the beam of light. Then I made all kinds of colors I should have so that maybe sets the clothing together and what type of

clothing. Then I do the wig that will go along with that. It's like putting the pieces together but its mostly, it's not where I think about the actual characters, it's not where I think or how old is she or what did she do or why is she locked up. It's mostly just a visual image, like what kind of wig, you know, would look like this type of situations. Something like that, I don't know.

LL: They all seem like helpless women. Some of them feel like housebound women or people who are not in control of their lives and are prey to either, they are all prey to some force that you don't see.

CS: I think that came from working in this format it was kind of a problem to think of different situations where someone is horizontal. It could be a floor or a bed. Eventually I did some that were kind of sitting up and I guess that does tie in with the centerfold aspect in that this person is reclining or in some elongated position like that and I guess that, to me, signifies something that's vulnerable or sexual perhaps. I mean obviously I wasn't thinking of it at the time, but looking at these now, I guess I just pickled these characters for that reason maybe because they were suitable, I mean that somebody laying down wither looks sexy or asleep. I mean, I wrote down different possibilities. The person could be sick on bed, it could be a person who is drunk, a person could be thrown down. Trying to list why and how someone can get into these position and then start trying to do them and i guess I was more interested in the vulnerable ones, the ones that looked like you feel sorry for them. So I guess that's why.

LL: What about the blonde wig? What were you trying to? Some of them are much more ambiguous than others.

CS: I think I was ambiguous. I don't know what she was about. Sometimes I would, I just try to fool around with the shape so much that I would just do anything point the camera in this directions and see if that works in there or and then again do something with the lighting that would be more dramatic or mysterious and the just put wigs and clothes together.

LL: Hat's coming into the frame on the right?

CS: Actually, it's just the edge of the curtains, black curtain. It was kind of bad negative, the slide is bad so that in the slide you can see detail in the curtain, so you can tell they are curtains but to make a print they had to go in order to get the face to show up.

LL: We are just looking at a piece called "Firelight" do you describe this one in any particular way?

CS: "Orange tile" or something like that, "orange T shirt with tile"

LL: A woman is holding onto a newspaper and what it has travel?

CS: It is actually a classified and maybe some travel or readings, ESP, ads.

LL: What was it taken from?

CS: Like the back the classifieds, personals, that's what's it is.

LL: In one corner there is and ad that says "single" + club Med.

CS: Yeah, right.

LL: Did the idea for this picture come from this paper?

CS: No, but I had the whole thing set up, the costume and everything the lighting. But it was like something else was missing. So I decided ... I thought I would just rip out a piece of paper and I thought it wouldn't really be distinguishable as to what the contents of the paper were but I thought that if it was crumpled up, maybe some of it was out of focus maybe if just one word came thought, just whatever that word was, it would have something to do with it. It didn't really matter. I mean I did pick a piece of paper that looked... had a lot of different things so it wasn't really like about... like not all the little things have to do with happening being single. There is one "know yourself, know your future, I forget what else. I still wanted that to be ambiguous too. I didn't want it to look like the clue to the picture.

LL: So when you started what particular kind of emotion or person were you trying to elicit?

CS: Well the tile is like "suburban kitchen floor tile" and so that's a really tough kind of a background. I mean, how often do you see.... I guess, I thought of some child who is playing on the kitchen floor. She is not really a child but she's kind of daydreaming. Maybe that blue light that is kind of reflected on the skirt is supposed to be as if there was a window or picture window or something to do with the outside that this woman, this girl, is maybe looking into or she was sitting there looking at the paper and ripped out something and kind of leaned back and was just thinking about what she had ripped out. So I guess that's how the scene came about. I mean it's tough to combine, to think of what would logically go on in some of these backgrounds but...

LL: Did it begin with the background?

CS: Yeah.

LL: Was it a piece of linoleum that you had in the studio?

CS: Yeah, actually I went across the street to Woolworth's and bought it. At that point I had exhausted my own floor and my own bed coverings and sheets. So I was thinking of little things to use.

LL: We are looking at a picture called "black sheets". Did you begin with the black sheets? I mean, so many seem to start with the background, instead of the character.

CS: Yeah, I did I guess. It has to be because I have to think about what I mean, these are horizontal shots, so I have to think first off what is this woman going to be doing.

LL: What is she doing?

CS: Well the lighting was like the second thing I did after deciding on the sheets. The light was supposed to look like maybe she was waking up in the early morning by the sunlight coming through her windows, as if she was hungover, been out all night, her makeup was all runny and it was like hot, so she was just greasy with sleeping in the heat.. So that kind of what she was based on; looking like waking up.

LL: What did you do to yourself aside from the obvious wig?

CS: Well, I put makeup on but trying to like imitate the way I look when I wake up and I haven't washed my makeup off so under my eyes and smeared and even the lipstick is kind of like smeared around her mouth and I put Vaseline all over the face and then the wig was wet.

LL: She looks like she's been through the wringer

CS: Sometimes even the intention of what the shot was based on changes once I've taken the shot too. People may look at that and think it's completely different than what I intended. I mean, she does look kind of like she is kind of more looking at someone who is about to jump on her.

LL: Some of the shots remind me of those awful chainsaw massacre movies or Halloween. I don't know if those are things that you have in mind...

CS: No, but that's great.

LL: But some of them do, you know waiting for the victimized woman. There have been so many of those movies in the past two years, female exploitation flicks, but that isn't what you had in mind doing?

CS: No, not at all.

LL: In the piece called "blue shirt" you're lying against a wooden floor holding an orange blanket, what were you trying to get across in that one?

CS: Well I mean that was like I think I talked about the light that coming through.

LL: Is that the first one?

CS: No the first one was one of those slides...

LL: So it started with the light?

CS: Yeah, the shape and the light coming in, the beam of light in, so.

LL: Is this supposed to be someone who is locked up in a cabin?

CS: Yeah, it could be like that. It could be that light is from somebody opening the door a little bit looking in or it could be as if she is in a cabin maybe one of the beams of wood in a wall is missing and the sunlight is coming through or something like that.

LL: Lest talk about the... is this the first one?

CS: Yeah.

LL: This one will just identify as "white T shirt" She could be the same character as the woman we have just been looking at., but she has got on a brown wig this time.

CS: Yeah. It was a brown wig and this one was like a grayish-brown wig.

LL: What is she lying against there, is it the door?

CS: Yeah, the floor.

LL: They all look like overgrown campers.

CS: Looked up at camp all these years.

LL: “The Gingham Dress”, where does this fall in this series?

CS: That was, you know, one of the first ones I did.

LL: She looks a lot younger than most of them.

CS: Yeah, that one, that dress. I picked it up out in Arizona and didn't try it on, kind of finally tried it on, and it was obviously for a girl who didn't have tits yet so it was like...I still like the dress. So I had to like strap myself in and that's why I wound up looking like a real young girl...because I got into it with the real long hair. Actually I don't think it shows in the print, but in the slide she has stockings that are, or pantyhose that are all runned and ripped so it was supposed to be like some country tomboy who is wearing her first dress and stockings, a hillbilly or something.

LL: We're looking at a photograph now where she is sitting up on a bed. What is that? Is that a bedroom?

CS: Yeah it is a bedroom. That shot came together by, I think I was moving my bed around for another shot and in the reflection of the window I saw the light that I had just brought in there. I hadn't started setting up. I just saw the reflection of light from behind me in the window and then I thought that would ...I would try to work that into a shot and then, thinking about that light, why would a light coming from behind me, I thought... I mean, it's more related to maybe a pin-up or centerfold shot because it was supposed to look like maybe there was either a porn movie or this little girl or this young woman is reluctantly going to be posing or doing something that she doesn't really want to do. And that light is right behind her and she is just like holding the thing around her, scared to let go. So that one was more sex related than the others.

LL: The last shot is...centerfold

CS: It is his woman who is lying, I refer to her as a “dirty girl” because she... it was based on one of the first things I tried. One of my first ideas for the whole ARTFORUM project was a woman spread out on these pages that is completely dirty and grungy-looking and like the antithesis of what the normal centerfolds are and eventually through a lot of different trails. I finally got the right formula for the character. She has a long brown wig and it's really dirty and messed up and the lighting... she's just lying on a wooden floor, a brown wooden floor and the lighting was set up to look like light from a window with branches with

leaves in front of it and again as if maybe she had been locked up or something or lived in a cabin. And I had to for this shot, I did it so many times. I got so tired of doing it because every time I was getting ready for it, I would go out in the hallway of my building that's really filthy and like roll around the hallway trying to get just dirty all over and it was really a horrible thing to have to do every time. A shot wouldn't work out, so that's what she is. But that actually I don't think it was printed as well as it looked in the slide. They must have the original slide somewhere it may be at the printer.

LL: Ok, now we've talked about all the work. There are a few questions I haven't asked you. For one thing you said that you weren't. We talked about this before, but just to recap. You said that you weren't trying to parody but there are obvious comparisons in the subject and format and so on. Do you consider yourself as a feminist artist in any way?

CS: (laughing) No, and I kind of hate that word. I wouldn't want to denounce it or anything. It has to do with politics and I'm not interested in politics and making some kind of statement like that.

LL: Whose work interests you particularly now, who do you feel a particular kinship with, your peers or older artists?

CS: All of my friends. Richard Prince. I mean it's funny to say that but it's true. We are really working off of each other. We're inspired I think. I mean I'm inspired by his work. We are all doing similar things so it's hard to say. I'd feel like I'd have to name all my friends but...

LL: But there is a whole group of people who are associated with this gallery who work with or off of photographs or who are working with references to photographs or to found images of one kind or another. Do you feel any sort of a kinship with those sort of people, rather than let's say traditional painters.

CS: Well sort of. But it depends on how that's interpreted. Because it's really the final image that interests me. It's not so much whether they are working the same way or using the same influences that I have. It's really the final result. So as much as I like what Robert Longo does, it's not, it's so different that... I like it for just what it is. I don't see it as it is related to my work. I don't know.

LL: In the same vein, I mean in getting back to the show, the reason that I selected your work for the exhibition and selected the other artists is that you all seem to be dealing in different ways with the theme of anxiety and I wonder if that's something that I have just laid on to your work or it is something you in fact think about. And if so, why is it that all of your work or a great portion of it deals with anxiety?

CS: I don't know, because I'm not that much of an anxious person.

LL: The characters are

CS: Yeah, they are.

LL: I am not trying to suggest that your work is a form of therapy for yourself but I'm wondering....

CS: It is but...It is therapy not because I'm acting out my own emotions, but it's therapy because my acting out these certain emotions maybe I feel that I don't need to feel that way or something. Maybe that's why it could be therapy for me, I don't really know but for some reason I guess I find anxiety very interesting and it can encompass, it can hold so many different emotions at once. I guess that's why it's so interesting to me because it's somebody that's anxious about something. It can have to do with somebody that is happy or something that's angry or sad. There is something interesting about faces that are not really distraught but some kind of ambiguity that's going on there. That suggests anxiety. In fact, perhaps the reason I am interested in that is because occasionally I'll come across a photograph of some star. Marilyn Monroe, there is some book out on Marilyn Monroe that is like all of the worst pictures of Marilyn Monroe, the rejects that were put together in some book; and I've always been more interested in those kind of shots. Shots of people... like of Elvis when he was fat and sweaty and gross looking. Those kind of images are much more interesting to me; even though the person may be smiling or that person is very famous. It's much more interesting to see, I guess, the human side of that person or something.

LL: Do you think that is any way the work is done in response to the times? To the atmosphere?

CS: It must be.

LL: I mean everyone is a part of their time.

CS: Yeah, I'm not trying to be any kind of "time" right now so, maybe that's a response to something. I mean, right now nostalgia is so "in" that maybe I'm trying to work against that so obviously, I guess, it's a response to it. I don't know. Not really but just descriptive of my materials, so I mean, sometimes if someone asks me what I do I might, depending on what the situation is, I might say that I am an artist. But to photographers, I'm not a photographer and to many artists, I'm not an artist. So I don't know what I am. I don't see these as photographs. I guess that's what it comes down to. They are a little bit more than that, but I don't know what. I was thinking before that a lot of... I think what is influencing me now or beginning to influence me is old paintings or the idea that these could look more like a painting of somebody rather than somebody in a motive.

LL: What kind of old painting?

CS: Oh, court paintings or calendars, where somebody just posed with a chair and their favorite pet., little things in the background, actually, painted backgrounds, little symbolic things that person might be holding, that are symbolic to me. Maybe it's just their favorite glass or goblet. So those kind of details are set up in that kind of situations where there are a lot of thing going on in the background, in the foreground, and there is the subject. That person is posing, but the way that their hands are presented, is supposed to have something to do with saying something about themselves. So I'm thinking about those kinds of somewhat symbolic things without trying to literally be symbolic.

LL: In talking with Peter Campus about a group of works he did a couple of years ago, very large slide projected portraits, he described his photograph not as portraits but as portrayals which suggests more of a performance aspect to the work. And I would suggest that maybe that would be an appropriate way of describing your pictures, would you agree with that?

CS: Yeah., portrayals, yeah.

LL: In a way they are private performances witnessed only by the camera.

CS: Well, I don't think of them as performances. Some people have asked me that, but I don't because, although I feel like, at the time I'm performing, the performance aspect of it is not something that I would want to share with anyone. So what is ultimately captured in the camera is maybe the culmination of what I went through to get that. But it may completely misrepresent what I was actually feeling. So it's not really a performance.

LL: Have you done performances ever?

CS: Yeah, in college, experimental things, and there were collaborations. Although sometimes it was interesting, it was also kind of boring and tedious and I well actually, I've done what could be considered performances. When I first move to New York, I dressed up in certain costumes to go to my job at Artist space and the costumes were just like secretarial type characters. And I mean, that was interesting and it was fun the first couple times I did it. It was mostly fun. When it was just on the spur of the moment, when I was just getting up and looking, playing with clothes and suddenly finding myself really getting into it, into a character and then deciding "why not", why bother washing up, why not just go to work like this? It became some form of entertainment for the people that I worked with which I didn't like. It was nice to make people laugh. I guess the performance aspect of it was too, the part that was personal to me wasn't really being projected or something. It just became a kind of comical thing that I didn't really... It was almost, like, too serious for

that. Also the problem of going out on the streets like that was very weird because I didn't look really funny but, and I didn't look very abnormal or different....maybe I would have a wig on and glasses and funny high-heeled shoes which to me is a costume but being out of your own element. The kind of uniform that people adapt when they... especially in New York a lot of people I know adapt to a certain uniform just to deal with the streets and walking around and the people that you see. So I just felt so vulnerable in these ridiculous costumes that I just got freaked out and I stopped doing it altogether. So I guess its not a real performance.

9 Entrevista de Richard Flood a Matthew Barney, 6 mayo 2003. Transcripción de vídeo. Archivo del museo Walker Art Center, Minniápolis

My name is Richard Flood and I'm a chief curator at the Walker Art Center. Tonight we'll be conducting a dialog with Matthew Barney, who has just completed a series of five films shot in sequence which have been increasing in the world of art and film over the past eight years. The films deal with the dance body and material involving architecture, mythology and religions of the western world. And now please start with the dialog with Matthew Barney.

RF: If anybody here has had the pleasure of trying to explain what Matthew Barney does, you have to explain Cremaster. There are many different ways to define what the Cremaster muscle is. It is the muscle on the male testicle that lows or retracts responding to stimulus like fear or coldness. Through all of the films there is this moment of no differentiation of the fear in the womb. The sexual determination has not been settled. The child has this one moment of being free of sexuality.

MB: That was the first model that I had, it is a way of thinking about this piece that would move through these five locations. And it would follow the development of a form. An organism that would be defined in a biological way, it has a predetermined ending and that was dealing with itself how it can ever come as condition and maintain its lack of differentiation. So the reproductive system that model, became the most concrete thing I could hold on to when I started the project. The abstraction of the cremaster muscle became the whole world of where these organs are gonna end up. The cremaster muscle will be the governor that is pulling down.

RF: How does the project begin?

MB: The project started on the Island of Man. The idea was that we will film the piece one summer and the following spring we will go back to Great Britain and it will be broadcast on television during the week that the TT race curves around the Island on Man. I couldn't convince the television station to air the piece so we went back to New York and took it to the public theater in New York. We basically rented a theater and we showed it as a video projection, which I wasn't very happy with in terms of the color saturation. I really wanted to have that broadcast feeling like a heavy saturation and flatness. Somebody suggested why you don't transfer it into a video, which I did. And that really started this other path that the project took.

RF: A very particular use of the Island of Man. I forget what you were looking at for a location because the Island of Man came late, you were basic looking for a cultic site.

MB: A cultic architecture condition of some sort and ended up on the Island of Man. Some of the locations were, like the region was fixed but the specific character weren't defined.

RF: And then when you were there on the island a lot of things made sense.

MB: Yes. And answering your other questions, after Four and the One which both had

the same sensibility, this broadcast board sensibility we transferred to film. Five had a different agenda when it was made, knowing that I would have included it in the cycle and the sculpture work. I made it differently and then Two and Three follow the same way. It was made conscious that it was to exist as a film.

RB: What about the location?

MB: The Island of the Man started with the flag probably, the tree legs, and tried to take the island and create a body out of it that would have three factions that were in conflict to each other. Taking the nation turned and deconstructed it into blue in green.

RF: And also there was the ram.

MB The ram that was nothing other than the three legs and was the thing that helps to save the project. Thinking about the horn as genital or as biological map in the case of an organism that is ascending and descending. The ram has two pairs of horns ascending and descending.

RF: The horns are also directional; they are a record of a period of time as well, which is kind of great when you get into the film. They act as a kind of journey. Let's see the first clip of Cremaster 4 and get people involved. Do you want to set it up?

MB: At the beginning of the piece, the first images are of the TT Course. It is a racecourse that goes around the Island of Man. It is attractive because it is a kind of circulatory system for the island. It establishes the island as an organism.

RF: This is a great assist, thank you.

(video clip Cremaster 4)

MB: There are three fairs one ascending, one descending and one who is locked. That is described by the bangs in the hair. And the organ of the drivers, one group has ascending organs and the other one has descending.

RF: This is a very nice place to talk about the geography and how the biology and the characterization of the landscape begin to play a major roll in this and everything that follows.

MB: This was the first single channel work that I made. I think it ended up being balanced against this idea of a piece of geography being the main character. You would still have these factions of characters within in certain geography that will be developed to the point of forces or tendencies within these biological conditions, almost. That will do one thing.

They will move in one direction and that will be their job. They wouldn't be allowed to have an emotion in any way. The collection of the emotion could be granted to the place.

FR: Some of them were born to be expendable.

MB: Maybe in general looking at the whole cycle, it is definitely true. The idea of this form that moves through these five different places, through five different geographies. The character acts as a host body that can be inhabited temporarily and then move on.

RF: Developed in Canada, you have this enduring character. You have this tap dancer, dressed like a Dundie. How do you come about him as the centerpiece for the film?

MB: I guess Houdini; he was always a character that was in my mind as a symbol of one of the core elements of the project. This notion of a created tool. The first time I went to the Island of Man, I found like Victorian fossils in a place where people would vacation around the time Houdini made his name. During that era, the physical culture came where Houdini belonged. This new way of defining physically that will be both an interesting coalition between what I was already thinking and a way of taking something that the island of Man had to offer: the coalition of the Victorian frame and the TT bikes. Every summer these pieces of plastic move in front these Victorian buildings. The characters come out of that place. I go to that place and try to mine out what's there. I try to ask a place to be intestinal, where the sculptural body could pass through and come out in the other end transformed in certain way.

RF: Before we move to One. You take yourself out in Cremaster 1, what was the intentionality around that?

MB: I think it has to do with willing number One to be the initiation of the cycle and to have a feeling of indifferenciation. I met Martin Domination at the time I was trying to think about using the field for the place of this highly choreographic piece to take place. In the back of my head, I was ending up playing Martin's role without knowing what that role really was. And then I met Martin and her one character has a quality that I thought could bring that sense of openness to the piece that I couldn't bring myself. And she also made it possible to bring it to the world of the '30 musical. For me, a lot of these happy birthday films have this quality; this overhead photography and the microscopic choreography. They attempt to create those forms of perfection somehow, a field of people without individuality, elements of a perfect machine. But when you look at it there is a heavy human element in them. That was a thing I was very interested in achieving in One. The fact that I didn't rely on digital animation for the choreography was useful for this case.

RF: Is it ok with you if we see our next film, Cremaster 1?

MB: Yes.

(video clip Cremaster 1)

RF: In terms of the whole Cremaster One kind of came from another universe. You feel like you are in a clear space.

MB: I always wanted One to be like a gate, the drop in the water that would initiate the forms and thoughts. One will be the next moment of conflicts and rejections. Number 2 can be thought as a kind thought, the initiation of an idea that 2 will represent the first rejection, the rejection of itself as an idea. Number 3 would be the narcissistic piece, the idea of falling in love with itself again following this path. Four would have this sense of panic that it needed a way out because it knew that Five was coming. Five would be its death. It would be where the idea has to be defined. Yes, I always wanted number One to be a spark in certain way.

(video clip Cremaster 5)

RF: I kind of remember Bronco Stadium, the salt field in the Rockies, The Chrysler Building. I always remember you talking about the films without talking about those landscapes and architecture. In Cremaster 5, the next one, you go to Eastern Europe to a kind of dark gothic world and create an opera. How did you arrive to the conclusion that you wanted an opera?

MB. For me, going to Bucharest was the notion of ending in the warmth of the bathhouse and it should be old and ancient. Then I was looking around the city, and I found great buildings and the idea that Bucharest, in certain moments, wanted to be Paris at the end of the 19-century. The opera and the bathhouse were one of them. There was a level of art that I found very surprising. There was a kind of continuity that I didn't expect. I wanted number Five to be deep in emotion. That the rest of the cycle wouldn't go and the opera house seemed to be a perfect place, a good way to turn that on. Also Budapest had something to do with Houdini, there is a relationship between them. I think what the cycle does, which is probably why number One, Two and Three were much more predetermined than Four and Five, I think there is a kind of treading that happened that starts in the stadium where I grew up and played football and then moves into the Mormon basin that I felt pushed into a certain way and then to New York where I get other mythological information. I was less sure of how to deal with this.

RF: And also there is Ursula Anders. And you play three characters.

MB: The piece was based in Houdini and his relationship with his mother. The Houdini character is spliced into three versions of the same the character. The diva on stage that climbs, the giant in the pool beneath the queen (I was interested in the form of the bath, a kind of organic architecture. I was fixed on how to take Ursula and integrate her in the architecture. One of the ways it happened was thinking about the impression that she would make on a chair. The connections are made in an anatomical way.) The third is the musician who is on the Chain Bridge between Buda and Pest who is trying to jump and finally does jump. Actually three descending characters.

RF: When you go on from here there is this exclusive moment of mythology and this remaining of Houdini, you begin to enter back into the real world but it is still based on things that we know from the real world. By the time you get to 2 there is a historical character at the center of the film and that is Gary Gilmore. You might know Norman Miller's book *Execution and Sign* written for TV a long time ago. Someone from a very different world comes into the film and that would be Norman Miller himself as a kind of mortality of Harry Houdini. Surrounding this is the Mormon religion. The Mormon situation directs many of the factors. How did you develop the project? What came first?

MB: The place. The place was Rockies, the wall of the Rocky Mountain and the Mormon Basin where I grew up. I wanted to take on the Mormon faith and form the landscape the way the TT race forms the Island of Man. I wanted to have the character that I experienced growing up there, which was a paternal character. I wanted to feel both as a sort of conditional landscape where the Rocky Mountains divide you as a person from that isolated part of the world, from the rest of it somehow a kind of a barrier that exists. There is an attempt to create a constellation of fathers that included Houdini as a sort of speculated grandfather. I was thinking of how the bolt could be a way to deal with the execution. That could reflect my image of this paternal landscape to me.

RF: Thank you Matthew, let's see the clip of Cremaster 2.

(video clip Cremaster 2)

RF: How did you organize the whole project with so many different characters?

MB: It was one of the things based on the Mormon Church. The way the Mormon Church used to speak about the relationship between people within the hive, being stronger than any individual people. I found this an exciting way to try to organize the project, to think that the whole piece could exist within the hive. All the characters were bees in certain way. The Baby Fe was the queen bee and Gilmore was the drone. He wasn't going to live more than one generation. Like any drone, he needed to learn how to survive and he thought that if he took his own likeness he could go to Houdini and learn how to metamorphose. And then Houdini would performance this metamorphoses where he would trade places with his wife. He would go into a lock strong and then minutes later his wife would reemerge. That was one of these replacement tricks that are very common today.

RF: Going to Three, and I think it is essential show the clip. Here you have something that you have been struggling with from the very beginning the conceptualization of The Cycle and that's the Chrysler Building. It is the longest; it's very dense there are many things, especially when the film moves to the game board, which is the Guggenheim. Richard Serra, one of the greatest American sculptures, performs Abif who was in the bible the architect of the temple of Salomon. Here he is working in the final touches of the Chrysler Tower. So join us in New York please.

(video clip Cremaster 3)

RF: I think now we reach the end of the cycle and I thank you very much Matthew for sharing your time with us.

**10 Entrevista al arquitecto Jacques Herzog, 17 abril
de 2005, Miniópolis**

Entrevista realizada durante la inauguración del museo *Walker Art Center*. Los arquitectos suizos realizaron la ampliación del museo anexando un nuevo volumen que expande el edificio existente añadiendo nuevas salas de exposiciones, un teatro, restaurante y áreas de apoyo. Se aprovechó la oportunidad de hablar directamente con ellos para preguntarles sobre el *Edificio Fórum* de Barcelona y su representación.

OB: What were the main ideas that you applied in the design of the museum?

JH: We tried to open up the existing building, favoring connections with the surroundings. For this reason, in diverse levels, openings were generated that favor lines of vision with the city and nature. The museum sets out to be a site not only to view art but also as a site from which the city can be viewed. The natural surroundings and the landscape helped to give unique character to the building. We incorporated the idea of the landscape of the American Midwest, the prairie, in the inner gardens and patios. The architectonic proposal appears a little like a typological game where the scales of the rooms are modified and varied creating a series of intermediate spaces en route.

OB: How is the proposal formally structured?

JH: It takes somewhat the idea of the existing building and inverts it. The museum previously was based on an ascending spiral route in that connected the different spaces, a species of Guggenheim we say. We took that idea of a spiral design to our proposal, the movement as a generator of a new spatiality. The route connector begins on the ground floor next to the existing rooms, passes through the new exhibition spaces and finishes at the restaurant terrace on the top floor.

OB: Are you saying that the building part of this idea is based on ascending movement?

JH: Yes, yes. The museum is on Hennepin Avenue, a busy street, one of the main arteries of the city. We incorporated that idea of traffic and outer movement into the plan. The building reacts with itself at the same time. On the Hennepin Avenue we have generated another street, an inner street connecting what already exists with the new addition that finds itself separated from the deep space only by semitransparent crystal. Whereas, from the outside, the new proposal appears monolithic, continuous and closed, from the inner patios it is like fragments, pieces that articulate with the landscape.

OB: The facades and their outer covering have been, from the beginning of the project, a distinguishing mark of the new intervention.

JH: Somehow seeing the existing volume of windowless bricks from the 70's, we respected it. But now we took it and turned it inside out. We showed its interior as the exterior. Our building arises like a contemporary reaction, a crystal cube. It continues creating the idea of a monolithic volume but from another materiality.

OB: I understand that this materiality varied during the development of the project.

JH: Yes, at first we thought about Teflon. Soon we went to a blue glass that, for budget reasons, was discarded and finally to aluminum panels.

OB: The incorporation of aluminum has something to do with Gehry?

JH: We worked in a very experimental way to try and to see what would happen. We decided on aluminum because it was a material that changes with the outside, the climate. In a city such as Minneapolis, the seasons are very distinct so the aluminum will vary according to the air humidity, the snow and the sun.

OB: These variations and these possible modifications were not taken to the interior.

JH: In the interior there are great white stucco plates that contrast with the existing red brick walls and in this way respond better to the program solicited by a museum.

OB: While the interior is continuous and homogenous, the outer skin is much more fragile. It articulates. It's perforated.

JH: The ornamentation is used in the proposal in a different way but always understanding that the decoration is like a dress for the building, a shelter that covers and protects it from the surroundings. The outer covering, the skin, comes from the idea of a wrapping. The building is enveloped in paper where movement causes superficial folds. The entire proposal arose from a folding and perforating of a continuous lamina. It is like children's games where they fold, cut and make figures. This almost white metallic skin can be interpreted as a sheet of paper that changes and is modified. It plays with the idea of ice and reflection. In the proposal we handled two "patterns", two families of skins; for the outside, a wrapping in paper and for the interior, a floral model originating more from textiles and images of the theater. We have investigated the sprouting of the typology of theater of Chicago and New York having analyzed its superficial language. We reached the conclusion that the expression of that outer image that existed in the beginnings had been lost. From there came our recovery of these and their incorporation into the proposal. This floral pattern has been modified in scale and applied to some planes of the interior, closing and defining the exhibition halls. The drawing has been trimmed and pierced in the surfaces of the walls generating a figure-bottom game that highlights its borders.

OB: This same natural floral design is applied to the interior of the theater and, in some manner; it's exported it to the rest of the building.

JH: Yes, we played with that grid, a kind of lace that in the theater is of a dark unseen color that is then later applied in contrast to the white rooms of the museum. The heart of

the building is the theater and it is dressed in a fragile material. Also that idea of wrapping is used to generate spaces. For example, the theater which is interiorly covered by this pattern, externally is surrounded by rooms and space of art.

OB: In a way, with this use of inner concepts from the outside and the entailment that you propose between exposition spaces and objects of art, it delimits the limitations between categories.

JH: What we tried to do is a hybrid architecture, where the traditional vision is replaced by a more contemporary one favoring the intermediate spaces and the situations "in between".

OB: What relation do you find between this building and the one that you made for the Forum Barcelona 2004? Do some conceptual connections between the two proposals exist?

JH: All the projects are interesting based on the relation between them. All are models, models of the previous one. The Tate Modern of London was used for the design of the Museum of San Francisco. The project in Barcelona is one of my favorites. It is a pity that it wasn't able to be constructed according to the original project. The source of the ceiling did not work. The central space also was modified. We had thought to incorporate a sculpture of Matthew Barney.

OB: Now that you mention Matthew Barney, your architectonic work is always very related to the world of the art. What relation do you see in your proposals between these two fields?

JH: I prefer art to architecture and therefore, artists to architects. In 1978, we met Joseph Beuys. We organized a show for the carnival of Basel and working with him was a tremendously important experience. We were very young architects. We had finished licensing and we had never known a figure such as him. It exerted a great influence on us, on our way of thinking and approaching architecture.

OB: In numerous projects you collaborate with photographers or plastic artists. In the project of the Forum of Barcelona, did you work jointly with somebody pertaining to one of these areas?

JH: To collaborate with an artist simply adds another dimension. In the Forum building we had planned on working with Matthew Barney on a project for a sculpture in the central part of the building. The artist is much more accustomed to considering the subject of the surfaces than the architect and we tried to approach this question radically in our architecture. It's almost inevitable that art and architecture are interlaced. We think that architecture must be mixed more with life, fused to the artificial and the natural, the mechanic and the biological.

OB: What is it that is of interest to you in the works of Barney? Do you make some connection between his work and yours?

JH: Well, yes. The project in Barcelona, for example, is one of those hybrid situations between nature and art. The visions that separate have been modified by others that integrate. A little of what is in art is realized by Matthew Barney with his performance relating art, architecture and landscape.

OB: If my memory serves me right, you had already worked with Barney on a project for the Kramlich house where you incorporated images of his Cremaster 4.

JH: Yes, on that occasion we incorporated some images, but in the building of the Forum it was a more intellectual work, more abstract, trying to incorporate into the architecture its corporal treatment.

OB: In some way the artists whom you mention, Barney, Cindy Sherman or Robert Gober, who work with the body as an expression, are denominated artists of body-art. Is it a conscious relationship between your architecture and that type of artistic expressions?

JH: One can compare the human body with a building. Everybody creates his or her own architecture that will later become part of the city. Also architecture is much like a species of artificial skin that ends up becoming an intimate part of the people.

OB: What importance do the architectonic images of your projects carry?

JH: In our work, pictures have always been the most important vehicles or messengers of this information. At the end of the seventies we experimented with video. We made video stills of scale models of our projects that disguised the look of the model and shifted the architecture into the realm of films and mass media. We are interested in pictures because pictures are open. They do not speak a conceptual language. They speak a universal language and can therefore go straight to the imagination. Towards the end of the sixties we also experimented with videos. We made dumb videos of scale models of our projects in which the image of the scale model disguised and tied in the architecture with the areas of cinema and mass media.

OB: You are saying that the images are somehow like vehicles that go directly to the imagination. How do you structure your work in relation to the diffusion in the media of those images of architecture?

JH: We have never developed our buildings and projects thinking about their repercussions in the media. We have never had a design strategy of that type. The strong emphasis in the perceptual processes that characterizes our architecture is surely related to the

era in which we live and work. Today images of architecture are produced in an era of the communication, not in an era of tradition or in the recent modern times of utopia that inspired the work of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. In some of our projects, we incorporated photographs as a way of expression. Images of this type are obviously used by mass media as well. We want to see if we can use the images like construction materials in the same way in which we would use brick, concrete or glass. The sense of advertising is almost destroyed and, for that reason, the images act exactly like a brick, stone or concrete wall, like any construction equipment.

OB: You once described your relationship with photography by saying that, on one hand, it attracts you by its sense of representation of the reality and, on the other, it depresses you by its tie to the past. Can you explain that relation to me?

JH: Personally I have a somewhat strange relationship with photography. It fascinates me but it also makes an impression to me because it is related so intensely to the past, with the passage of time, with death. It is really the objectivity and the incontestability of photography and its inescapable proximity to death that, at the same time, both fascinates and repels me. In addition, deceit is always a factor in photography. We grew up with the idea that photography was a means to represent reality faithfully. This means has always been manipulated and nobody believes in its authenticity any more. This subject was addressed by the photographs of Cindy Sherman and Thomas Ruff, who in a banal way modify reality through the digital manipulation of their images.

OB: In addition to this influence of the art world, did there exist any architects who made a mark on you or have influenced your design process?

JH: Mies has interested us, although I must say that no architect has been as important as the field of the visual arts as a whole. The work of Mies is magnified by its disquieting combination of classicism and romanticism. In the work of Mies, there is a simpler and purer version of the Farnsworth house; and later a version more ambiguous, more complex that can be found in the Seagram building of New York, where the bronze tinted glass indicates virtually the same as the metallic outer structure, a red oxidized color. It is as if everything had been molded in a great enormous piece. In this, Mies is closer to that which we are trying to do. The artificial thing is used to indicate something almost natural.

OB: And what about the building in Barcelona?

JH: Something of all our influences was latent. Our initial work had a little Le Corbusier, a little Yves Klein, a little Robert Gober. After all, everybody begins somewhere. There are always influences. Things can appear to be like others although they have a different meaning. Earlier our thinking about the image was more literal and we were more influenced by others like Aalto and Schauron. Schauron was one of our favorites because we thought that his work was strange, at the same time both real and unreal. We wanted the skylights

of the *Frei Photographic Studio* of the 1981 to be related to the sky. In the building in Barcelona you can still read elements that tie us to these authors.

OB: This proposal in Minneapolis, could it be said that it is more planar whereas the Forum building of Barcelona is more volumetric and compact? Do the two logics of different projects correspond or does a conceptual relationship between them both exist?

JH: The project at the end of the Avenida Diagonal responds to another logic that is more related to the projects of Tenerife or to the Prada building in Tokyo. The one in Barcelona is a monolithic object that arises from the sea. It is a blue sponge that could not have been done in another city. Each of our projects interacts with the city and its surroundings. We tried to respect the individual characteristics of each place. We thought that each city was different. With the architectonic projects we try to collaborate, to conserve to the specific identity of the place.

OB: You are saying that it was a monolithic object that left the sea but what I have understood is that, in the original ideas, the proposal had a different conformation.

JH: Yes, it's true. In the beginning, we were influenced by the high towers built in our surroundings. We thought about architecture as a vertical structure, a bucket that allowed whatever use or circulation. Later we became enthusiastic about the possibility of raising another gigantic modeled object, dominant and completely independent, but this idea raised many doubts. We asked ourselves, "Why must the building of the Forum be vertical, when the horizontal extension would allow contact between the people in a natural and much more objective way? How can an external space located between something extraordinarily great and monolithic independent blocks that are already constructed work? How can you vitalize this space without also having to design some type of park with the construction of shaded covered zones?" This type of design is already very well known in American real estate promotions. Why should we copy this design in a European metropolis that, by its history, the climate and the customs of its inhabitants, is already predestined to use the external space like an animated urban scene of its social interrelations? For this reason, we decided to discard the original ideas for the project and, instead of conceiving the building as an independent object within an open space, to propose a building that generates and structures its own open space. The triangular form arose almost spontaneously, because that form covered practically all the perimeter of the project and would adapt perfectly to the specific situation of the site that it occupies, between the ramifications of the grid Cerdá and the Avenida Diagonal.

OB: And in the outer resolution of the building, the use of the blue color ties the project to another one of your beginnings. Like the blue house of 1979, there also exists some other connection beyond the superficial thing?

JH: Ever since we began to work we have always tried to extend the dominion of the architectonic thing, to understand what its architecture is. This method of work appears to be the evident if one looks at our first projects like the Blue House of 1979 in which we used pigments of pure blue, Yves Klein blue, to destabilize the brick walls of the building.

OB: Thank you very much for your time. I appreciate it.

