The Completist

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Your soles hit the sidewalk. You immediately desire continuity, the potential of your footfall made infinite across the unfurled topography of the city. Although you won't claim it all through the physical trace, you desire the sense of completeness underpinned by the belief that your potential to claim the landscape is complete. Every twisting vector across the surface is open to your stroll. As a collector you perceive the total system as complete. The obstruction of your potential renders your desire unfulfillable. You are the completist. Your claim in the landscape of things is not consumption, but the desire to pass through, to project lines through objects and ideas, allowing the qualitative experiences and impressions to collect on and in you.[1] This is life amongst objects, where the continuity of the urban surface and the subjective interpretational minutiae of naming, language, and memory conflate.

The urban completist roams and assimilates the continuous built surface into their spatial repertoire, their spatial memory, their sense of control over the internalized whole. As the unchecked reproduction of modern media and collectible objects renders untenable the notion of the complete collection, so the repetitious growth of urban centers creates a complex and frustrating system over which to lay claim. In this morass, the field of inquiry must be reduced by developing a *perception* of completeness that is external to the system and is carried about as an interpretation or memory.[2]

Although incompleteness, as the status of an object, is the transferal of duty toward completion, there are conditions in which the status of incompleteness is terminal. Any movement toward the perception of completeness must occur extratextually, leaving no trace, through mental processes, as with riddles, or through interpretive assimilation, as with art objects. Raymond Queneau's Cent mille milliards de poèmes, a permutative sonnet which, in its terminal physical state, consists of just 10 poems, is both terminally incomplete as a physical artifact, as it is completed through performance or reading, and extratextually incomplete, because the prescribed method of reading the text requires 200,000,000 years of continuous attention. Completeness, or the act of externally completing the text by reading it is impossible. As with the city, the forfeiture of completeness to futility becomes a structural void that shadows all interactions with the text like a nagging phantom. This impossibility renders the object of desire an impenetrable solid.

The completist is tormented by intrasystemic incompleteness: those points in a potential collection, a complete system, which, through one's inability to claim them, remain impenetrable and exclusionary. A narrative investigation, following the completist through the landscape of disappointing terminal objects, can be structured upon the relationship of 'K.,' the 'land surveyor' of Franz Kafka's unfinished novel The Castle, to both the bureaucracy and physicality of the titular construct. The Castle stands as an intrasystemic solid within the text which is impenetrable to the reader and to K., both of whom consequently fail at their respective tasks of assimilating the castle objectively and accessing its spatial core, both perceived as a claiming of power, or completing. Although thematically prominent in the text, “there is not textual evidence for the existence of the Castle as a building separate from the village...

(the Castle) only exists on its own *terms*."[3] In a textual landscape which is based almost completely on archetypal settings such as inns, hovels, schoolhouses, and taverns, the Castle is characterized by ambiguity and muteness. Consequently it is resistant to association and interpretation through the formal castle archetype. Therefore, through K., the Castle, as a key increment in the body of the text which is physically impenetrable, socially inaccessible, and interpretationally and associationally elusive, is incomplete within a landscape, a totality, that is, as a realm, complete. The narrative follows K.'s failures to assimilate the castle into its geographic and social context, his emboldened independence from the incomplete solid, and his recognition of and entrance into a complete or accessible system: the village and its social system.[4]

The Castle's archetypal landscape establishes support for unfettered penetrating interpretation and occupation of the text. The impetus for this personal movement starts, in a physical environment, with the recognition or construction of an underlying system. In the process of the pedestrian's actualization of the city, certain urban settings, due to the systematic quality of their geometry, allow the illusion of openness to perceptually extend beyond the actual area of inquiry.[5] Downtown Atlanta, Georgia is parceled out in repeating blocks measuring 125mx125m, each housing an aggregation of structures of varying use. Philip Johnson's 191 Peachtree Street shares its block with The Four Seasons hotel and a Hooter's. The Georgia Pacific Center by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill shares its block with a subway station and a parking lot. John Portman's Marriott Marquis shares its block with two office towers also designed by Portman.

Although it is a *cause célèbre* to condemn Portman for turning the architectural back of the city on the streetscape, his prototypes have played out and progenerated into a fabric that is porous both on the grid of the street and in the continuous threads of public space that wind through the aggregated solid blocks of downtown.[6] His Peachtree Center Mall, occupying a block with a number of office buildings, retracts downtown's main retail center into the interior of a block with securable entrance points and a continuous flow of the public way through an interior space. In addition, the keystone examples listed above, and Portman's Hyatt Regency, and Westin, possess this continuity of surface, albeit convoluted and elusive, through which one can penetrate the constructed volume of the block. For those who seek it, this porosity perpetuates the desire to experientially collect the continuous urban surface of the city, including all of its interior hollows and passages (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Systemic Porosity, Intrasystemic Solidity in downtown Atlanta, GA.

Having helped to establish this somewhat specious, yet experientially legible system of porosity, Mr. Portman is also responsible for its most dramatic intrasystemic disruptions: the Apparel Mart, the Merchandise Mart, and the Inforum, a series of private, full block megastructures. These structures house wholesale clothing showrooms, wholesale decorating showrooms, and conference facilities respectively. Each structure is extruded from the property line and stands anywhere from 9 to 22 stories, with controlled access points on the ground level, and the highly introverted aesthetic Mr. Portman's more public ventures have drawn criticism for[7]: continuous expanses of mirrored glass or virtually windowless concrete megaliths. These structures are often lauded for their concentration of private commercial functions and their magnetic ability to bring people to Atlanta.[8] Yet through their solidity, scale, and ambiguity, they stand as irritating discontinuities in the accessible surface of downtown.

The manner in which the physical characteristics of solidity and lack of articulation situate the Marts as intrasystemically incomplete objects in the pedestrian's city can be tracked parallel to an examination of K.'s exclusion from the Castle as a rhetorical locus of power. For K., the Castle is socially impenetrable. Although a stranger to the village, K. persists in believing that he can assert his way through the bureaucracy which seals the Castle from even the villagers. The Castle stands as an agent of social stratification which the locals, who have accepted their exclusion for a lifetime, have no interest in assisting K., the hapless parvenu, to access. Nor does the Castle, which has bogged down his case in impenetrable red tape and doublespeak.

The tenets of alienation and impenetrability forwarded by the policies of the Marts are become a physically exclusive architecture in service of social exclusion. The literal impenetrability of the Marts is enforced through the long undetailed facades, long doorless streetscapes, and sentries visible in rare glazed voids. Although the 'closed' role of the Marts in the function of the commerce-based downtown as viewed by the pedestrian is no less ambiguous than any other structure, the architectural solidity and impenetrability makes actual the social and topographic impenetrability rather than making concessions to the general public, and formalizes its own irritating absence in the city's formal system.

The Marts, in the fabric of downtown Atlanta, behave not unlike sculpture, with a culturally established space of contemplation predicated on exteriority. In the realm of art, objects and artifacts, more than paintings and drawings, institute a space of externality in which the viewer remains. As freestanding objects, the Marts lack the frontality that in paintings create consistently binary relationships with the viewer to facilitate conversational spatial discourse.[9] Objects isolated in space defy this quality spatially to confuse their communicative status, become architectural elements, and externalize the viewer.

In a porous fabric that depends on aggregation, the Marts exert a repulsive force on the viewer not only through isolation, but the intrasystemic aberration of their scale. In the density of the downtown environment, it is impossible to take in their totality; one is pushed first to the opposite sidewalk to glimpse the parapet, and even further still to see two corners at once. As with sculpture in the round, the viewer is kept roving about the object, stalking it in an attempt to establish a frame of reference by surveying it against the spaces and bounding elements in the distance, by remaining tenuously distant from it. This spatial reading of the object foregrounds its primary architectural correlation as an obstacle and cements its physical impenetrability.

More subtly and lastingly than their solidity and scale, it is the ambiguity of their use in the face of conflicting echoes that renders the Marts impenetrable. A haze of civic propaganda beclouds the presence and effect of the structures. Urban growth advocates trumpet the beneficial presence of the Marts and their role in concentrating powerful capital into downtown.[10] As if seeking to verify these qualities of beneficence, one looks for depth and invitation. In its place one finds only patronizing illusions: the reflected sky in expanses of mirrored glass, open concrete grillage at street level before what appears to be a shadowy hollow, but is in reality a black painted concrete-block wall (Fig. 2). In these details one sees mounting correspondence to the questionable physicality of the Castle and the ambiguous relationship of that physicality to the image of power constructed by the villagers. The glass in the castle's windows, which could have stood for openness or an allowance of depth, only reflects the sun, replacing what might have been the glimmer of content with a mute adoption of absence. [11]

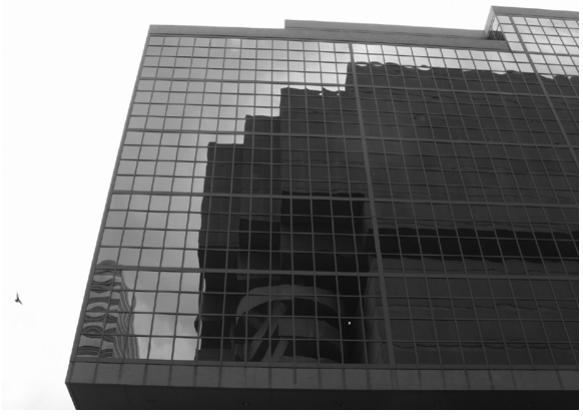

Fig. 2. The Inforum reflecting the Apparel Mart.

Ultimately this beguiling generosity comes at the price of an architectural repellence in the

city's formal system similar to the *panem et circenses* ignorance of Kafka's villagers that eternally props up the bureaucracy of the Castle. However, the civic benefit is as hermetic as the structures themselves. The commerce that they support and the capital they invite are self-serving, with hotels and foodcourts doing little to invigorate a real livable downtown community.

A conflict analogous to the bifurcation of the publicized civic goals of the Marts and their physical composition lies in the field of museum anthropology. In the accessible system of objects that compose a culturally native museum, the reception of alien objects is carefully constructed by "outsiders who are attempting through their reconstructions to stimulate someone else's experience."[12] The site of reception of these objects is institutionally drawn to its outermost visual surface where any ability to receive them from their cultural interior or heart, to penetrate them, is repelled by lack of integration of the viewer's frame of reference into the social system which created them, or is illusory, constructed from flawed personal analogies or popular allusions. As has been routinely criticized, the object is "outside of its surroundings, outside of the other inventions of the people to whom it belongs, and outside of other phenomena affecting that people and its productions."[13] To receive an object outside of its cultural milieu is to lack the supporting continuum of knowledge that is integral to it. Anthropologist, Michael Ames, showcasing this disconnect, recounts a situation in which the reverent care for a ceremonial dish of an indigenous people was belittled by a cultural native, who recalled that "they used to be stored under our house, and when the river flooded we would paddle around in them as if they were canoes."[14] This inversion of values begs a counter-argument that suggests the evacuation of both institutional and native power to foreground the fascinating experience of the surface, in which its impenetrability is recognized, not veneered with false entries.[15] It is allowed to just be.

Thus, voided of a sociocultural milieu and having no inherent external use, the rhetorical solid avails itself to the new types of personal meaning that the excluded other can project onto its accessible surface.[16] For the Marts, this is an evacuation which begins with their internal mysteries and also includes their status as voids in the pedestrian fabric, which, although personal, is rooted in the exclusionary social system which must be unlearned. Like the Surrealist 'readymade,' the building emerges as a more formally clarified version of itself.[17]

In the case of Meret Oppenheim's 'Object,' an icon of surrealism consisting of a teacup, saucer, and spoon all clad in fur, this involves a transformation, a resituation of an archetypal object into a space of uncertainty that does not typically accompany it. Like the funerary diadem too flimsy and delicate to wear, Oppenheim has given to these objects a representational status by robbing them of their use; they are as useful as the word 'teacup,' or a photograph of a teacup. The viewer, because of the familiarity of the form and grouping of the objects, seeks, like K. relating the disintegrated visions of the Castle to concrete memories of his hometown[18] - to perceive what has been quantitatively removed: the actual teacup. Yet, the teacup, the root object, is missing. Its power is now only in the surface that it configures, which in turn only communicates the absence of the teacup it cannot be claimed. This trajectory is analogous to the figure of the Castle in Kafka's novel, into an open representational or communicative status.

Through a similar process, the Castle's abstract power is drawn out of the physical object. Here it is given a form through personification. Like the final doll in the matryoshka, the body is all surface and no space. For K., this body is Klamm, a high ranking official from the castle. Klamm's physicality, like the Castle's, is suspect. His being is voided, an evacuated body, not present for himself but for his representational status as a proxy for the Castle's power.[19] The only time K. sees Klamm is through a peephole in the tavern. Seen only with one eye, the image of Klamm is flattened and still (asleep). K.'s only evidence of Klamm's existence is equivalent to seeing a photograph of him.[20] Although Klamm is still powerful as a representation, he is only as powerful as the strength perceived in the media through which he appears: the shared history of the villagers, the reception of which he has no control over. Thus, the shared or personal memory that the representation relies on gives a more immediate form of control than the experiential space of an object, where immediate power is shared. For the receiver, consciousness of this exterior locus of meaning awakens the understanding that finding power

in the representation requires turning inward from it.

The building, which has physical power over experience, is not a representation. It is a condition. In architectural representation, particularly architectural photography, the power of the building projected onto its surfaces, then projected again onto the surface of the representational body, the photograph. As with the vision of Klamm, the architectural photograph decommissions the physical building by establishing its non-presence and locating the authority for its reception outside of its physical body by means of a subjective voice.[21] This voice gives primacy to a particular view or message that is instrumentalized in the photograph through point-of-view, cropping, and tone but which is only latent in the source. Although not intentional, the architectural photograph then has the effect of evacuating the building of its experiential potential by making it a non-spatial singularity. The building becomes only the view, a projective penetration into the architecture, unfolding its emptiness into convex absence.[22]

Yet, in this dimensionless stillness the authorial voice seeks to reintroduce the movement and depth of space through compositional syntax, didactic framing, omniscient or impossible perspectives, or the artificial tone of lighting and filtering. All of these are devices to reinstate the building's power, but in a new voice that is not of the building, though it speaks upon and through its surfaces. Like the illusions of depth on the castle and the Marts, these representations pervasively suppress the vehicles for empathic entrance into the space of experience: people.

Throughout the history of architectural photography human figures have been almost taboo in the frame, beginning with the technical problems of live models in the long exposures of early cameras. Today, figures rarely appear in professional photographs with the conspicuousness that accompanies posed objects or furniture. It is more common to see attempts to reduce figures to the status of inanimate objects by orienting their backs to the camera or encouraging movement during long exposures. Perhaps the human presence conveys too much; it robs the subjective authorial eye of its tacit presence and points to the viewpoint of the model rather than the rhetorical viewpoint of the photographer or architect, the progenitors of the photograph's power. Revealing the power struggle between the model and the illusion, photographer and historian Cervin Robinson remarked that “if one could not record experience undistorted, then a picture of a family's living room, say, might be more revealing than an image of their guarded faces.”[23] By pointing to the inherent incompleteness of the architectural photograph, which depends on the viewer's unfulfilled relationship with the building, the figure unmasks the veil of spatial power that the photograph wields.

In the figure's stead, a tendency toward the mise en scène in architectural photography insinuates an illusionistic character to grant access to the space of representation through a controlled rebus of objects: a peeled apple, a paring knife, partially drained wine glasses, an open book. One of the most well known tableaux is a photo of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye in which the architect's chapeau, sunglasses, and two small packages lay on a table in the foreground haphazardly (Fig. 3), referring pointedly to the absence of a particular man from the scene.

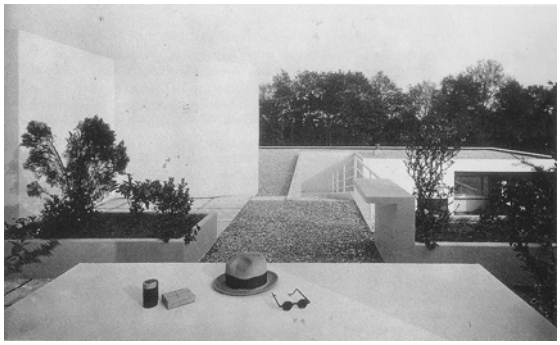

Fig. 3. “Poissy-sur-Seine, Villa Savoye, 1929” Claude Gravot

However, the production of works that avoid the illusory and acknowledge the separateness of the representation provide stronger inroads for the viewer to control the power of the accessible surface. To foreground the true emptiness of the subjective as a photographic technique would effectively close the false invitation to discourse extended by the aforementioned rhetorical devices extend to initiate creation by the viewer of their own space outside of the photograph.

The photography of Daniel Mirer identifies the quality of emptiness that characterizes so much architectural photography and makes a

presence out of it. No longer does one see a structure struggling with its status as a representation, where it must attempt to individuate itself without relying on the experiential edges between bodies and surfaces, structures and landscapes, to make it real. One sees a solid object, the delineation of whose space across a two-dimensional surface does not embody that struggle. The subject of Mirer's photographs is the flatness of the print.[24] In draughtsmanlike delineation, Mirer is able to manifest the spatial emptiness of a building physically by applying it projectively to all surfaces of a volume at once, by exploiting the flatness of the medium. These are not architectural photographs. They eschew the rhetorical devices noted above. Some carry the haphazardness of the snapshot; most employ Kubrickian static compositions or one-point perspectives that would never appear in professional architectural photographs (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. “Slat Wall, 57th Street & Mad Ave” Daniel Mirer

The “sameness and interchangeability” which was criticized in the work of Mirer and other photographers in a group show called “Vanishing Point,” could be used to describe Mirer's oeuvre alone.[25] However, it is this uniformity that allows the photographs to be emptied of their rhetorical power, their mock subjectivity. They seem to loosen their representational status because of the banality of the subject matter, in whose lack of ingenuity one can not justify the necessity for representation. The photograph's status as an object becomes singular, not an isolation of its source but as an object, and in the space outside of it, evacuated of that rhetoric, one is set free to relate to it on one's own terms.[26]

Although someone claims the secrets of the photograph and its source, those on the outside must write their way around it, in order to write it into themselves. Here in the narrative, the viewer realizes that they must reconstruct their own physical condition, eroded over time by investment in scenarios predicated on the experiences of others, or they must simply look away from the representational surface and observe their current physical surroundings for the space, experience, and empowerment that the image has misplaced. It is in this external space that K. evacuated the social power from the image of Klamm by seducing his mistress and cuckolding him. This about-face in K.'s aggressive pursuit to engage Klamm was the forerunner to a series of actions that removed K. from the shadow of the Castle. For K. this was an action of individuation.

Through this protracted personal process that involves the relinquishing of inherited notions and experiences, the impenetrable object, is rendered a void and transformed into a surface for projection; it becomes useful. The recognition of intrasystemic incompleteness relies on a clear cultural framework, a tradition, within which one can detect departure and exclusion. In this alienation is born inspiration and empowerment.

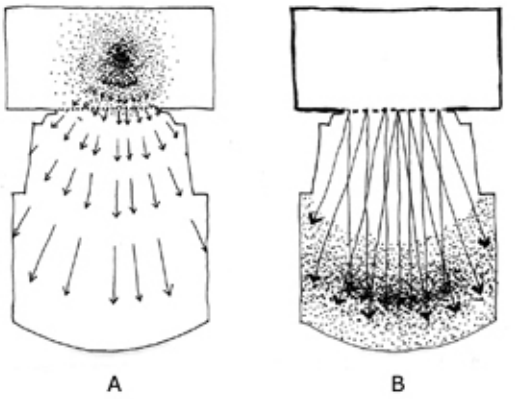

Fig. 5. (A) Typical binary performance and reception relationship, (B) Conflation of performance into reception from absence of typical performance hierarchy.

John Cage's musical piece *4'33"* collapses this entire process into under five minutes. A solo piano player emerges onto a stage, pulls back the keyboard cover of the piano, and sits still on the bench for 4 minutes and 33 seconds. The absence of performance in the space of

the traditionally dominant party, the stage, shifts the onus onto the audience, and onto the singular audience member. This binary transferal allows the reemergence of control over the action of one's own behavior, thoughts, and senses through the incompleteness of the performance (Fig. 5). By voiding the traditional locus of power, the cognizance of one's own power to act is ignited. *4'33"* has been described as an invitation to act in contribution to the performance. But in the traditional spatial context of the theater, the invitation is to be for oneself, to occupy a space external to the performance and to act personally and to register the individuality of one's actions vis-à-vis the impenetrable and empty space of the performance.

Susan Stewart asserts that "the collector constructs a narrative of luck which replaces the narrative of production."[27] However, luck is dubious and shaky; the result is the incomplete. The voracious collector of experiences and interpretations, the completist, learns to subdue the incomplete, to move beyond the abstract consumption of mysterious means and methods.[28] All of these solids, turned empty through lack of potential for intimate knowledge, are beacons that you may leap from into your own personal productions. In these is the seed of inspiration, where things closed to you through their virtuosity or mystery awaken in you the desire to create, to claim that internal heart that was the personal or cultural impulse of another. It is the depth of things that we cannot claim or understand that cause us to retreat, to look into ourselves and our abilities, and to produce what is then our own, outside the shadow of the impenetrable solid of the world's work.

Endnotes

[1] Describing jazz record collectors, Matthew Sumera the mentality that underlies this drive. "The completist, in a very real way, sets out to try to understand the context of every moment, of the specific ownership of time, to try to understand it better." "The Completist Syndrome, Part 1: Official Recordings," One Final Note, http://www.-onefinalnote.com/features/2004/completist01/ (July 24, 2006).

[2] Michel De Certeau explains the projective claim over the city through the linguistic term 'synecdoche,' which "expands a spatial element in order to make it play the role of a 'more' (a totality) and take its place (the bicycle or the piece of furniture in a store window stands for a whole street of neighborhood)." *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1984), 101.

[3] Karoline Krauss, *Kafka's K. versus the Castle, The Self and the Other* (New York, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1996), 15-16.

[4] "Although The Castle presents the irreconcilable breach between the subject and his social object position, it also demonstrates the possibility of freedom which is opened up precisely by this breach: the feelings which are not reconcilable with the rhetorical tools at hand create the impulse to find a new discourse." Krauss, *Kafka's K. versus the Castle, The Self and the Other* p.96.

[5] "He (the walker) thus creates a discreteness, whether by making choices among the signifiers of the spatial 'language' or by displacing them through the use he makes of them. He condemns certain places to inertia or disappearance and composes with others spatial 'turns of phrase' that are 'rare,' 'accidental' or illegitimate. But that already leads into a rhetoric of walking." In this rhetoric, De Certeau's use of synecdoche then expands the systemic fragment of the city to stand for a perception of "the totality" of the city as an intimate and personal claim. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 98-101.

[6] In his typical absolutes, Rem Koolhaas wrote that in Portman's downtown developments, "once you ventured into the system, there was almost no incentive to visit the rest of downtown, no way to escape." *S, M, L, XL* (New York, New York: Monacelli Press, 1997), 841.

[7] Describing Portman's Bonaventure hotel in Los Angeles, Frederick Jameson stresses "the way in which the glass skin repels the city outside, a repulsion for which we have analogies in those reflector sunglasses which make it impossible for your interlocutor to see your own eyes and thereby achieve a certain aggressivity toward and power over the Other." *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1991), 42.

[8] Most directly, praise is found in their own press releases: "AMERICASMART ATLANTA is the largest wholesale marketplace of its kind in the world, and is a leading international market source for a wide variety of consumer goods. It hosts 23 wholesale markets and six Market Wednesdays that annually attract more than 548,000 attendees from every U.S. state and 80 countries." Keri Arroll, "AmericasMart Atlanta Awarded Inaugural Nebraska Furniture Mart Think Big Award," AmericasMart, http://www.americasmart.com/amc/v40/press.cvn?id=11&p_id=169, (September 11, 2006).

[9] "In the case of painting, the shape of the canvas privileges the space directly in front, but the two-dimensionality of the canvas allows this front to be experienced broadly, even at acute angles." Donald Kunze, "Architecture as Site of Reception – Part I: Cuisine, Frontality, and the Infra-thin," in *Chora Volume 1: Intervals in the Philosophy of Architecture*, ed. Alberto Perez-Gomez and Stephen Parcell (Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queens University Press, 1994), 98.

[10] Even those who dislike their introversion laud the capitalistic project of the Marts' themselves. New Urbanist, Ellen Dunham-Jones defended Portman "because he used some of his own money to finance the America's Mart building while people and businesses were streaming out of downtown in the movement now dubbed white flight." Michael Wall, "That's Fugly," Creative Loafing, http://atlanta.creativeloafing.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A16342, (May 23, 2006).

[11] Franz Kafka, *The Castle* (London, England: Penguin Books, 1997), 3, 8-9, 89.

[12] Michael Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums* (Vancouver, British Columbia: UBC Press, 1992), 54.

[13] Ira Jacknis, "Franz Boaz and Exhibits: On the Limitations of the Museum Method of Anthropology," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 79.

[14] Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*, 57.

[15] "Rather than grasping objects only as cultural signs and artistic icons, we can return to them, as James Fenton does, their lost status as fetishes. *Our* fetishes. This tactic, necessarily personal, would accord to things in collections the power to fixate, rather than simply the capacity to edify them." James Clifford, "Objects and Selves – An Afterword," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 244.

[16] "While essentialist conceptions of man met their destruction, the notion of 'condition' henceforth replacing that of 'nature,' the *surface* of things has ceased to be for us a mask of their heart, a sentiment that led to every kind of metaphysical transcendence." Alain Robbe-Grillet, *For a New Novel* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1989), 24.

[17] "'Solid' seems to be a synonym for 'real' in terms of pure extension, but objects – whose solidity is a means of concealment, whose face hides some interior mystery – are the chief suspects in the 'crime' of signification." The object emerging from this veil of meaning is for itself, a visceral object, and is open to be claimed. Donald Kunze, "Architecture as Site of Reception – Part I: Cuisine, Frontality, and the Infra-thin," 96.

[18] "...it really was just a wretched looking small town, a collection of rustic hovels... K. had a fleeting memory of his own home town, it was scarcely inferior to this so-called castle..." Kafka, *The Castle*, 9.

[19] Philip Weinstein describes Klamm as a "fiendishly repositionable... screen." p.104 ; As Krauss points out, the power one seeks in this shadow is "contradictory to the logic of the text since the Castle and Klamm are never 'present'." *Unknowing: The Work of Modernist* Fiction (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005), 21.

[20] "Both monocle and camera tend to turn people into things, and the photograph extends and multiplies the human image to the proportions of mass-produced merchandise." Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1998), 189.

[21] "A photograph is always perceived as in the past; its very presence bespeaks of absence. It is the document of a fugitive moment or a far away place, or lost being or object..." Diana Agrest, "Framework for a Discourse on Representation," in *Places and Memories: Photographs of Roberto Schezen* (New York, New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 6.

[22] Kunze's categorization of architecture, other than it evades categorical definition, is its "principle property of emptiness." Emptiness being a volumetric quality, in flat photograph this emptiness is absent, leaving only a representation of a building lacking the experience of its architecture. "Architecture as Site of Reception – Part I: Cuisine, Frontality, and the Infra-thin," 85.

[23] Cervin Robinson, *Architecture Transformed* (New York, New York: The Architectural League of New York, 1988), xi.

[24] By removing the instrumental subjectivity, Mirer's photographs move away from what McLuhan called the "outer matching," which in photography hinges on the re-presentation of a subjective view, where the meaning of the image is then received with that view. The object quality of the Mirer's photographs gives us now the "means of becoming involved in the making process," that being the making of the object's personal meaning. McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 194.

[25] Ken Johnson, “Everywhere's the Same: Nowhere in Particular,” The New York Times, http://travel2.nytimes.com/2005/06/03/arts/design/03john.html?ex=1159588800&en=42b588bc80b79a59&ei=5070 (June 29, 2006).

[26] Mirer's own description of his subjects could also apply to the reception of the photographic objects themselves. “They are spaces in which the flattening of shadows on surfaces creates an architecture without depth for the subject, who is buried, disappeared, dissolved into its structure. A subject who would otherwise occupy space is engulfed into the void of here-could-be-anywhere, into the monumental dissolution of space. I introduce the sense of an uncanny presence into these spaces by photographing them when they are empty.” “Wishing Rooms,” Art Journal, Vol. 59, No. 1 (New York, New York: College Art Association, Spring, 2000), 90.

[27] Susan Stewart, *On Longing* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1996), 165.

[28] “Thus the collection is not only far removed from the contexts of material production; it is also the most abstract of all forms of consumption.” Stewart, *On Longing*, 165.