

THE CHARTER OF ZURICH

Furio Barzon

Eisenman
De Kerckhove
Saggio

BIRKHÄUSER

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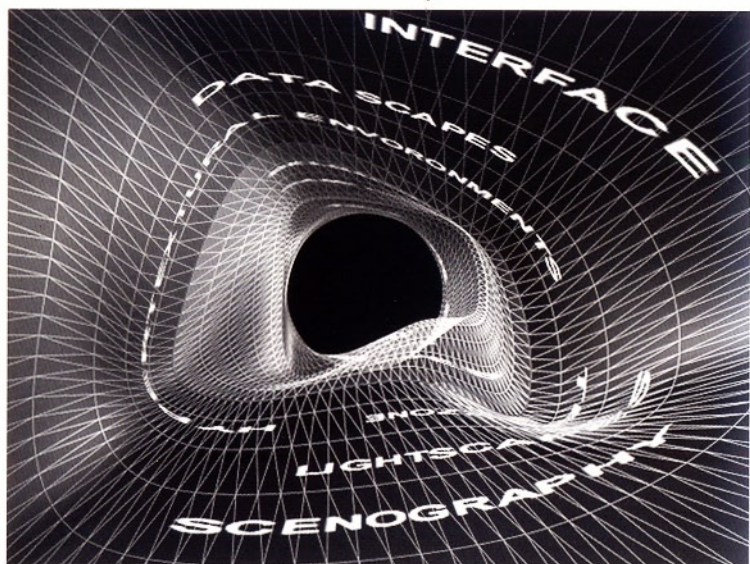
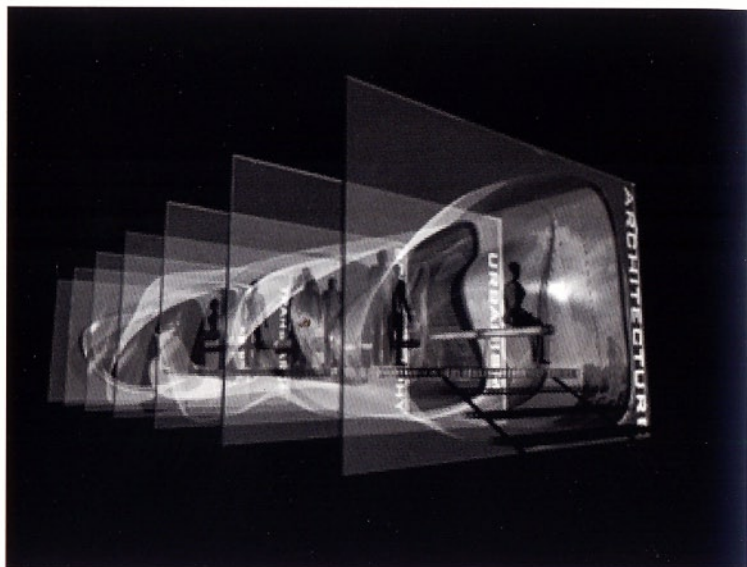
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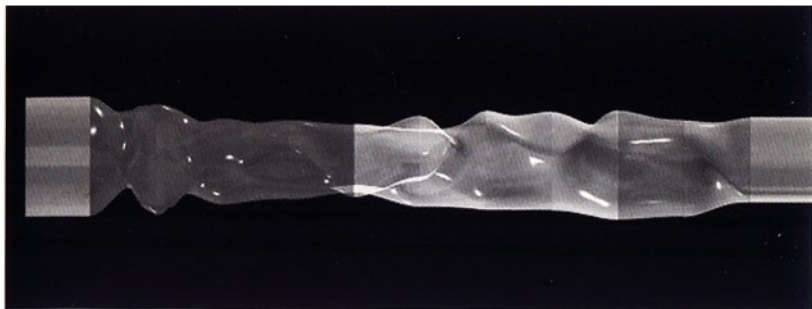
Preface by Gerhard Schmitt

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LAB[au], i-tube mnemonic space, 1999. This is one of the first advanced architectural projects of augmented reality. Combining the real (i-tube: exhibition pavilion) and virtual (mnemonic space: hypersurface and information flows) into a single immersive experience, LAB[au] has created a new physical way of accessing knowledge. Depending on user needs and requests, informational databases emerge on interactive panels, modifying from time to time the three-dimensional shape of the entire architectural body.

<http://www.lab-au.com>

speed of thought. Anything you think arrives immediately at the brain; though sometimes an idea arrives late, it is in any case always "just in time".

It is no accident that presently there is an emerging desire for things immediately. (In reality, we still may wait several minutes on-line to download information, despite the effective and constant progress in the speed of processing and transmission.)

Technology is pushing decisively toward a point when we will have a mind/machine connection independent of the capability of personally reprocessing reading or thought; where connections will occur not inside our head but on the screen of new visualization devices.

Therefore, virtual means, for me, the appearance of a critical mass of interconnections that are suddenly fixed in images in the mind, the same way as thoughts. Our mind's thoughts have an illusory permanence and are very private; on the other hand, the thoughts we transfer to the screen in a visual form are very reliable; we can in fact recall them when we want and they will always appear in the same, identical way; we can also share them with others.



On 11 April 2000, the ETH in Zurich hosted the presentation of the international version of the "IT Revolution in Architecture" book series. Keynote speakers at the meeting were Peter Eisenman and

Derrick de Kerckhove. At an open discussion held between these two scholars, moderated by the series editor and by the vice president of the ETHZ, Gerhard Schmitt, they interacted on the themes of new digital technologies. A broad ranging debate followed, and this book is its first result. Screens, connections and electronic interfaces are all around us and live contemporaneously in flexible organizations and trans-typologies. Architecture becomes an electronic and interactive organism; a new type of space is coming to light; indifferently real or simulated, two or three-dimensional, this space makes everything contiguous, mixed, contaminated. Velocity is no longer physical but is the speed of thought, absolute. Then is Architecture still even possible, that old architecture, the one made of walls and bricks? This book will answer this critical question and will provide the theoretical framework of the New Reality that we create individually and as a society. We have a whole new universe to model architecturally, and the walls will not only be built of inert materials but will be essentially virtual. They will burst open indefinitely to make room for communication. But it will be virtual worlds, more than three-dimensional worlds, that will bring architecture even more to the center of contemporary thought.

Furio Barzon (Venice 1972) is the producer of *architecture.it*, an architectural website and a free thematic search engine. In the Seventh International Exhibition of Architecture in Venice he presented the interactive work Biennale *pARCH Corner*. Co-founder of the review *archi_ve_s*, he is the curator of the exhibition *terra.trema* and the ideator of the CCPeace group, operating for the construction of a Communication Center for Peace, an interactive virtual world.

The Information Technology Revolution in Architecture is a new series reflecting on the effects the virtual dimension is having on architects and architecture in general. Each volume will examine a single topic, highlighting the essential aspects and exploring their relevance for the architects of today.

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