bebop spaces

First you learn your instrument.
Then you learn music.
Then you forget both of those and just blow.

-Dizzy Gillespie

Bebop SPACES is a theoretical investigation inspired by the master and alternate takes of the bebop performance entitled Leap Frog, by Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. The recordings feature a series of improvisational layers, one portion interacting and superseding the other. Representations of space, line, volume, and texture are implied in the music. The designer/performer hears the three dimensional space of interpenetrating movements where primary and secondary precincts are juxtaposed and projected against complex geometries.

Bebop SPACES wakes up architectural dreams and places to experiment, discover, manipulate, interpret, and extract. The site of this ongoing investigation is your mind. The viewer, as the ultimate client, establishes the program. The material is space and light. The function is the psychological demand of spatial experience. The budget is time, passion, and commitment to the study of architecture.

The work is similar to a performance device or a game, exploring the boundaries of its limits. Each composition seduces and motivates the viewer into grasping its potential, thus requiring an ability to ‘inhabit’ and ‘decipher’ it. Doing so demands participation by both the performer and the viewer. Thus, each bebop SPACE is always a two-sided event.

The designer can extract from the process at any time, allowing for the experiential interpretation of space from two-dimensional drawings into three dimensions at any scale, as a detail, as a building, or as an urban design. The designer/observer listens and interacts with the bebop SPACES, thus provoking the experience of a design process/product as it is performed.

The process is a cause and effect relationship, beginning as a simple underlying structure that grows with compulsion. Through the disciplined deployment of joints and connections, primary, secondary and tertiary precincts are articulated within the overall geometrical arrangement. The viewer can read multiple interpretations.

At first sight, this mechanism is a seemingly frozen construct, but it rapidly unfolds as an open-ended experiential phenomenon. The structure develops into a metamorphic labyrinth, as a self-perpetuating continuum. Each composition is a complex work of resultant simplicity derived from an ordered language of constants and variables, constructing and articulating the elements of size, shape, treatment, location, and orientation. The complexity is discernible, traceable back to the original order. Due to this scalar approach, there is not one piece that is considered “the end product.” The entire process is also the product.

studio process:

This intensive design studio looks, probes, and builds at the interface between program and site by means of a non-traditional, hands-on, and systematic pedagogy. The objective of the studio is to develop not only a theoretical and procedural foundation for the utilization of media in architectural practice, but also the essential attitudes, awareness and skills for succeeding in today’s media driven civilization and professions.

The studio uses a pedagogy based on play and interpretation in which students are placed in the space between analog and digital media and asked to engage in progressive shifts between them. The poetics of representation is the driving force for generating architectural understanding. The act of playing (execution) precedes results (conception) or, interpretation follows form and form follows action. This allows for the development of an experimental, yet critical attitude towards the value, rationale and logistics of media in architectural design.

The student is introduced to an iterative series of incremental and additive design processes within a focused set of constraints and issues. The process unfolds in four successive stages.

stage 01: a space, program and site analysis of honorific works of architecture.

stage 02: an analysis of the underlying structural and thematic components of a masterpiece jazz composition.

stage 03: a series of synthetic improvisations applying selected elements from the architectural analysis to the musical structure.

stage 04: the procedures, elements, ordering systems, vocabularies, and formats discovered in the previous exercises act as conceptual generators for individualized bebop programs and sites.

Professor Neiman recently received the 2005-2006 (Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture) ACSA Faculty Design Award for his project: Bebop Spaces. Those choosing this studio must be deeply interested, committed, and willing to actively engage and participate in this ongoing research/ creative project.

software requirements: form-Z (submit order form by 12 noon first day of class; see pull-down menu course web page) and Adobe Creative Suite 2 (Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat, etc.).