

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

In the design of the gestured forms introduced into the selected site, a focus was placed on the need to define an envelope of activated space (defined by gestured forms), locating the sedimentation of occupants waiting for the elevator arrival, amidst the hustle of the transitional occupants passing through this sequential space. Four gestured forms ranging in size from a human scale up to a slightly larger than human scale (Fig. 1, 2, and 5 thru 8); were designed to create that perceived envelope of activated space (Heider p.69-78 App.D), adjacent to the elevator door. An attempt was made to alter the passing occupant's spatial assessment of detached and activated envelopes (Gibson p.100-122 App.B); as they walk by the elevator in a sequence from the exterior portico to the offices or classrooms. By doing this, the transitional occupants receive an indirect awareness of the 'affective' quality in this site, in addition to the more direct awareness perceived by the occupants waiting on the elevator. Therefore, by enhancing the interstitial and residual nature of this site through a focus on the sedimentation of occupants adjacent to the elevator door, the space's threshold will be reduced in transparency; while adding to the sequential relationship of the more primary spaces on the exterior and interior of the main building.

In order to enhance the interstitial and residual quality of this space through a reduction in the threshold's transparency, attention to the vocabulary of the installed forms was necessary. The perceptual awareness of this installation was paramount to the 'effectiveness' of these forms; since any new awareness, perceiving the space's threshold, would heighten any existing minimal awareness. The vocabulary of the installed forms, was made to be more sculptural in materials, fabrication, and spirit, than architectural. However, their 'affectiveness' to manipulate spatial perception and their detailing of connections reacting to the existing site's idiosyncrasies, were the means to an architectural treatment of the site's implications. The form's vocabulary was made sculptural, in order to facilitate a dialogue with the occupants, predominately art faculty and art students. After there was an increase in perceptual awareness, both conscious and subconscious, the adjustment and enhancement of the spatial envelopes and threshold's opacity would then be possible.

The installed form's vocabulary was pivotal in another way, aside from a relation to the occupants using the space. The effects of the space's constricted size and potentially claustrophobic perception, influenced the decisions made in creating a vocabulary that would not contribute to an already severe problem. A transparent nature in the forms was a requirement for any additional surfaces that would be reducing the space even more. The higher the transparency, the less intrusive the forms would become. However, the forms needed to be detected to some degree, or they would be of no use in redefining the existing spatial thresholds and proxemic relationships. In order to find a middle ground between transparent and perceivable, the surfaces were created with a repetition of wooden strips leaving an open space (varying from two inches to six inches) between each strip. This would allow the surface to appear transparent with no perceived threshold of space when viewed at a right angle (within an envelope of space defined by a concave surface) to the surface. It would then take on the character of a solid surface, defining a spatial threshold, when viewed from a skewed angle looking down the length of the surface (Fig. 2). By manipulating the surface in this manner, spatial envelopes could be perceived externally, influencing the occupant; and then disappearing and avoiding claustrophobia once the occupant moves into those envelopes of space (Crick p.36-41 App.B; Crick p.53 App.C; Crick p.206-207 App.C).

The spatial envelopes, to be perceptually enhanced, define and contain specific moving and standing activities organized into behavioral patterns within this selected site. The installed forms frame the envelopes that contain these patterns, rather than describing the patterns directly. This displaces enhancement from the architectural intervention onto the perceptual awareness of the interstitial and

residual spaces, while still enhancing the behavioral activities indirectly. The method of framing the space and not the functional activity avoids the problematic assumptions made in the design process related to structuring events and usage reasoning. Enhancement of the defined thresholds in the spatial envelopes brings a new awareness to the site's patterns, ultimately encouraging new desired activities.

The majority of this thesis study involves the adjustment and enhancement of the spaces containing those activities revolving around the elevator doorway. The adjustments to the spatial envelope adjacent to the elevator, were made in a similar manner to the refinement process studied earlier in multiple model studies, during thesis research (Fig. 3, refer to Schlieb, Independent p.2-34 App. M). In that process, gestured forms were adjusted through subtle movements, influencing and activating their related spaces. These movements would vary envelopment characteristics of the defined spaces, creating improved conditions in perceptual awareness of spatial thresholds and sensitivity to relational gestured forms. Figure 4 illustrates two examples of an adjustment made to a gestured form, refining the envelopment characteristics with their related spaces. The refining adjustments of activated spaces made through movements of the installed gestured forms; exposed manipulations of spatial perception and behavioral activities (Crain, The Comprehension p.36 App.B). From a site intervention, a greater understanding was possible beyond the traditional model studies investigated at the architectural studio level (Ittelson and Proshansky p.234 App.L; Collins p.20 App.K); this was made clear with the differences found between the earlier model study (one inch scale) of the selected site and the installation of the designed forms into the actual space (human scale).

The adjustments to the gestured forms could have taken many different directions and resulting effects on the behavioral activities. One possible option of adjusting the installed forms was to add a skin membrane to the ribbed wooden strips. This would increase the perception of the spatial thresholds, enabling the measurement of transparency and opacity influences. Another option was to apply the 'Pratt White' pigment to the wooden strips. This adjustment would transform the installed forms from a sculptural materiality into a structure with surfaces that become camouflaged within the surrounding 'Pratt White' walls. This type of transformation would measure the differences in the impact of an introduced sculptural form in contrast to an invisible objectivity that places emphasis on purely subconscious perception of physical proxemic thresholds. However, even though these two adjustments are related (possibly to be explored later as a further investigation of the entry hall and the installed forms), they are of a different nature study. In this thesis study, as introduced with the research conducted earlier in the independent

study (Fig. 3, refer to Schluieb, Independent p.2-34 App. M), the nature of adjustments revolved around the manipulation of the physical form. Several options presented themselves, the first possibility was the removal of an entire gestured form from the context of the other three forms. This would measure the specific affects that the removed form contributed to the installed condition of the entry hall (Barker, Ecological p.16-17 App.I). To focus the study, the positioning of a gestured form could be moved slightly, measuring the changes in spatial envelopes related to the portion moved (Hogarth p.93-94 App.H; Hogarth p.95-107 App.F). This was the method used in the earlier independent study involving the paired study models, and therefore would best illustrate any differences in designing with scale models as opposed to the actual space (this being one of the original reasons for the construction of the gestured forms at a human scale and introduced into the actual entry hall, refer to Collins p.20 App.K). More intensive study could continue, adjusting the forms to a refined condition, through subtle re-scaling or re-forming of the initial forms at critical points in the form's gesture. This would measure the degree of affectiveness a gesture can have on spatial envelopes. The extent of this study was simply to imply the potential for research in the manipulations such as these, by recording a single iteration of the many possible adjustments of gestured forms.

When locating the gestured forms into the entry hall to influence the spatial conditions that existed, there was an issue of physicality that needed to be addressed. The gestured forms could have been installed at the floor level, thereby physically obstructing the movement potential of the entry hall's occupants. This would create a study of the gestured forms, measuring the degree to which movement patterns would shift and structure themselves relative to the installed forms; adjusting the placement of the forms to record these shifts. However, the choice of a conceptual form of perception over a physical perception was selected. This conceptual study was achieved by suspending the gestured forms from the ceiling above the eye level of the occupants, thereby making no physical obstruction to the occupant's movement patterns by their installation. This resulted in a study that could measure the degree to which subconscious perceptions influence movement behaviors within defined spatial envelopes (Crick p.205-210 App.B).

The gestured forms that were introduced into the entry hall were design and refined with the issues described above, developed first in a model format to be followed by a study in the actual entry hall. By retaining a focus on the occupant's behavior related to the space around the elevator door, the installed forms could be created with an attention to the perceptual and spatial issues influencing those behaviors (Heider p.8 App.G). While the design decisions involving the refinement of the gestured forms can be

found in the earlier research done in the independent study (Schlueb, Independent p.2-34 App. M), this chapter will help to establish the context and concepts that were instrumental to the creation and development of the installed forms.