"Ignite Imagination"

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ignite imagination
an investigative project on exploring imagination

The intention with this project is to explore and open up the imagination, through investigating how text can be transformed into architecture.

I have an interest in imagination and what we can do with it. We have a great capability to form new images and sensations which are not perceived through our other senses. Our capacity to create these imageries grows in proportion to the things we see and experience. As this capacity grows, it will in turn affect how we imagine our tomorrow, as well as our future.

Architecture can be described as a way of storytelling and architects have been engaged in the art of this for hundreds of years. Architecture can be both manipulated and interpreted through narrative, and it can be used to emphasize the importance of architecture, both in a social, cultural and economic context.

A story can be told through architecture or in a text. The architect and the writer tell their stories in different ways, but they also have resemblances in their working process. The architect and the writer use their different tools to construct new realities, spaces and characters.

The text I have chosen to work with is a collection of short stories called ‘The Aleph and Other Stories’ by Jorge Luis Borges, who was an Argentine short-story writer, essayist, poet and translator and considered one of the most important writers of his generation. The intention was never to illustrate the texts by Borges, but to use the text as a narrative generator.

The outcome of the investigation and research phases during this project is a series of 9 architectural objects. The objects which have been created are independent from the text, but also independent from each other, and could be thought of as ‘short-stories’.

#1 The Path
#2 The Transmitters
#3 The Scales
#4 The Walk
#5 The Guards
#6 The Rafts
#7 The Sandflakes
#8 The Metamorphosis
#9 The Forest
The intention with this project is to investigate how text can be transformed into architecture. The intention is also to explore the imagination.

Ignite Imagination

The text I have chosen to work with is by Jorge Luis Borges. It is a collection of short stories called "The Aleph and Other Stories." Borges was an Argentine writer, essayist, poet, and translator, considered one of the most important writers of his generation. However, the intention has never been to illustrate his book. The texts are a generator for the imagination, and the outcome of the project is independent from the book.

I have chosen 9 extracts from the collection "The Aleph and Other Stories." Each extract is between 3-10 sentences. Each object was designed and interpreted through a narrative approach.

Imagination is our capability to form new images and sensations which are not perceived through our other senses. As this capability to form new images and sensations grows, it expands the horizon for what we are able to envision and will affect how we imagine our tomorrow and our future. The narrative is fundamental for the architect, and architecture can be both manipulated and interpreted through narrative.

The Objects

The 9 objects are independent of one another. Each object can be reorganised and re-accessed into other narratives.

#1 The Path
#2 The Transmitters
#3 The Scales
#4 The Walk
#5 The Guards
#6 The Rafts
#7 The Metamorphosis
#8 The Forest
#9 The Path

'metamorphosis' of this process

I have chosen to work with a series of objects and generate cross-fertilization and an expansive response through a narrative approach. This working method for the project also relates to the working method for this project which has revolved around accumulating & generating.
#1 The Path

The man is creating a path between two villages. The Path is a means of connecting the two places and is
in honor of the dead.

The Path is made of blocks of amber which are cut into cubes. The cubes measure 2x2 meters and are 4, 6 or 8 meters high. The Path connects the two villages by crossing through a forest and fields and a swamp.
#2 The Transmitters

The man has a fear of darkness, which he tries to counteract by catching light. To do this he creates Transmitters, which catch the sunlight and spread it onto a larger area, effectively increasing the amount of light. The Transmitters are made of a steel net which has pieces of iridescent glass attached to it. The light is filtered through the net and the glass and enters the Transmitters are suspended by a steel wire and steel cables, which in turn are attached to a mobile structure. The mobility allows the Transmitters to move around the landscape and optimize the location and angle for light uptake, depending on the season and time of day.

Of course I do not lack for distractions. Sometimes I run like a charging ram through the halls of stone until I tumble dizzily to the ground; sometimes I crouch in the shadow of a wellhead or at a corner in one of the corridors and pretend I am being hunted. There are rooftops from which I hurl myself until I am bloody. I can pretend anytime I like that I am asleep, and lie with my eyes closed and breathing heavy. (Sometimes I actually fall asleep; sometimes by the time I open my eyes, the color of the sky has changed.) But of all the times, the one I like best is pretending that there is another Adam.

The Scales

The man is worried about the increase of negative incidents in his city. He therefore decides to collect proof of these events in steel cables hanging from the tallest trees of the forest. He constructs large glass cubes to put the proof inside.

The fluid changes weight depending on the color of the incident. If the event has a negative charge it will be heavier and make the glass cube sink towards the ground. The man has chosen a remote spot in the forest for his experiment, where he hangs the glass cubes in steel cables from the tallest trees.

#3 The Scales

for plenitude - the sum of the experiences of which a man is capable; there is no man who does not fear the unknown. Jorge Luis Borges. The Aleph and Other Stories. “Deutsches Requiem”, p.67.
The man wanted to create a place of escape, where he can tear out and flee the din of the world but not under the constant threat of detection. He creates a network of glass panels and buoys that sit sunken into the trench in the ground. Molten glass is poured under, around and over the roadway and the rails, which stays mobile. Barrowed grits in the glass shoes breaks at light into the earth. Where the glass has settled the channel is filled with water, and with the sea off his buoyancy tanks the Walk now facts on the surface, and the water gives a resonance to all movement in the fields.

In now-distant days – distant less because of the lapse of time than because of two or three irrevocable acts – he had desired things – it wanted only to endure, wanted not to end. The taste of the mate, the taste of the black tobacco.


The man is obsessed with water, and collecting water, much like another person might collect stamps. He creates tightly woven screens which will hold and keep his water. The screens are made of thin metal and small metallic tubes which make up the structure which holds large pieces of water tight inside. The water is collected in these screens, through small holes on the top of the piece. The screens need to have water in them, until they reach the maximum and the pressure of the collected water forces the screens to close up.

The Guards
In the street, on the steps of the Constitución Station, in the subway, all the faces seemed familiar. I feared that I would never again be without the sense of déjà vu. Fortunately, after a few unsleeping nights, forgetfulness began.


The Rafts

The man never sleeps. He is afraid someone will steal his thoughts in his dreams if he falls asleep. He creates strange Rafts and high, open towers from which no one is safe. He is afraid that someone will steal his dreams. The Rafts are built in concrete and raised 20 meters tall and 6 meters wide. They house a hollow structure with winding stairs which leads to the top part of the Raft. The man knows according to the man. 

The boy descended the steep rough hillside that his house stood on and ran to the seashore, dreaming that he could capture abstract things such as memories. The boy is afraid he might forget things that have happened in combat, the return with the bloodied blade. "The Sandflakes are between 2.5 and 5 inches tall. The key urges the Sandflakes to be inside our house during the night as well, as he covers them in powdered chalk, which makes them emit a reddish glow during the darker hours.

#8 The Metamorphosis

The man is fascinated by the transformations in insects and animals. How the body structure changes through cell growth and differentiation. He creates a steel tower with levels of steel mesh. The man sleeps and dreams, forgotten. The bells for orisons awaken him.


To a facade that stands amidst the shadows of the new stone church, a man with gray eyes and gray beard, lying amid the shade of the walls, bounding his way with a smile of death, in a room night and day. The shadow is the very ghost who made himself into a wall in the shadow of the church. The man sleeps and dreams, forgotten. This only for virtual manipulation.
The man feels hollow and empty. He wants to feel embraced and surrounded. He creates a dense forest of aluminum poles. The poles create a moving gallery within their own structure, which the man constantly adds to.

The structure is tall and thin, and it moves back and forth to create a living and breathing entity.

The forest stretches almost without an end, since the man is continuously adding to the structure.

My friend thought that everyone was like him, but the earth is not as simple or as small as he imagined.
Process Book and references, development through project.


Process book and references, development through project.
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The intention with this project was to explore and open up the imagination, through investigating how text can be transformed into architecture.

This is an investigative project which has been about research, the creation and definition of a new working method, and the development of designing the outcome of the project. It has also been a process on a personal level to execute this kind of investigative project.

The text I chose to work with is a collection of short stories by Jorge Luis Borges called 'The Aleph and Other Stories'. Borges was an Argentine short-story writer, poet and translator, who are considered one of the most important writers of his generation.

The outcome of this project is a series of objects, where each object can be described as an independent 'short-story'. The intention was never to illustrate the book, but to explore if this could generate new architectural potentials.

I chose 9 extracts from the collection 'The Aleph and Other Stories' by Borges. Each extract has been the starting point from which an object has been generated.

The Process and Working Method leading to the Objects

First) The project started with an initial research phase, where I explored narrative architecture and the different divisions within it. Research was also done into architecture and tales, and into references relating to imagination in different ways.

Secondly) The next phase of the project was to create and define a new working method which allowed the text to be transformed into architectural objects.

Thirdly) The last phase of the project was utilizing the new working method to create and develop the objects.

Conclusively, it can be said that this project grew from an interest in imagination and the possibilities within it. It also stemmed from an interest to work with an investigative project and explore new working methods. By making this decision, the exploration and development of the process becomes equally as important as the final outcome.