



6 tailormade

fig.61

When an architect opens a fashion design textbook and reads the index, many words will look familiar.

Phrases such as 'construction techniques', 'stylistic tendencies', 'structural skin', 'pattern drafting' and words such as 'geometry', 'utility', 'movement' and 'egress' give us a clue that there are more than one similarity to the two design professions.

Both disciplines involve the tactile expression of a visual language where a designer either uses a pattern or a blue print to realize his design dream. The success of the product is not dependent on the concept, but on the technical skill of the person executing the design and very often this is not the designer himself, but someone with the necessary skills and ingenuity, such as a sewer or a builder.

The one constant in both disciplines is the human body. Everything that we do refer back to our bodies and in fashion and architecture the success of a product usually depends on the usefulness of it by a human audience, because "both disciplines remain rooted to the basic task of enclosing space around the human form" (Quinn, 2003:2,162)

Even in fashion, where 'beauty knows no pain', a garment ultimately has to be worn. If someone does not fit into a dress, it will merely be a piece of art. The same is true for a building, because if the design is not functional and ergonomic, the building will not be used effectively. It can then be said that utility adds longevity to both practices and according to Evans "...utility has played a great part in influencing fashion." (Evans, 1939:25)



Designers use the same shapes as a starting point, yet they end up with unique design solutions and these solutions are often created with a certain client in mind. In the case of fashion we would speak of a 'tailor-made' garment and where architecture is involved with a specific brief we might speak of a vernacular design. In contrast to this is the one-size-fits-all scenario in fashion design, where a wardrobe is mass produced with no specific individual in mind. This could be paralleled to a prefabricated architecture, where climate and context does not play a particular role in the building typology.

The design for KNOOP is very specific and thus 'tailor-made' for the specific clients.

Recent fashion innovations have shown that fashion has never had more to offer the built environment than present and designers from both professions are blurring the boundaries between them.

When discussing fashion and architecture as an inspiration for KNOOP, we look specifically at four things: reconstruction, the design process, the concept of 'skin and bones', and 'revealing and concealing'.

A further parallel between fashion and architecture is the use of simple geometrical forms to inspire a design. Architects such as Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn and Aldo Rossi are renowned for their skill in successfully combining simple geometrical forms into complex building sections and if we look at fashion, Evans highlights how "the rectangle and the circle appear to be the foundation of all shaped garments." (Evans, 1939:27)

URBAN RENEWAL!

by Mari Santos



"Zoey"
one large tshirt + one small yellow tshirt + buttons



"Ally"
one large tshirt + lace

From the onset KNOOP has aimed at reconstructing the urban fabric.

Koolhaas states that "... architectural speculation must pragmatically refocus on 'discovering [new] potential in existing conditions,' on 'aligning, and finding articulation for, the inevitable transformations and forces of modernization.'" (1996:68)

By using the existing context in terms of reacting to the climatic conditions, an unused site is reconstructed into an exciting and well managed environment.

Margiela draws parallels between second-hand or abandoned clothing and the derelict urban areas described as 'war zones' or 'wastelands'(Qiunn, 2003:28).If the existing urban site is however reshaped to fit a contemporary user it can be given a fresh lease on life.

By creating a new face for the site, KNOOP is creating a new link between memory and space. (Qiunn, 2003:70)

6.1 reconstruction



fig.64

KNOOP exposes how it was constructed, almost like a jacket that got turned inside out to show all its stitching and trimmings.

One of the main inspirations for the design of KNOOP was the “The Museum of Contemporary Art’s major winter show from November 19, 2006 to March 5, 2007 called, Skin + Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture.”

The curator Brooke Hodge had the inspiring idea of showing how fashion and architecture essentially comes down to a frame of ‘bones’ that is clad with a ‘skin’ of some sort.

KNOOP consists of a framework of ‘bones’ that is hidden and exposed by a ‘skin’ of solar screens. The building thus has a double system and fits Morton and Gandelsonas’ description of an inside/outside system where the skin is interpreted as form and where the entrance connects internal and external spaces.

(Morton & Gandelsonas, 1972:251)

Jenks highlights the fact that it is not only the last layer of a building, being the skin, that is a plane of meaning, but that the internal elements such as the furniture and books are also essential for constructing meaning in the human environment.

(Jencks, 1980:107-109)

By keeping to a simple frame, exploration could be done in the rest of the building by cutting away from and adding to the bones of the building. It is in this threshold that there lies potential and the edge that an architect uses creates a boundary that is either experienced as solid, or as very permeable.

Because the whole intervention on site aims at enhancing permeability, the building edge is also obscured to invite passersby to view interior action and conduct.

6.2 skin and bones

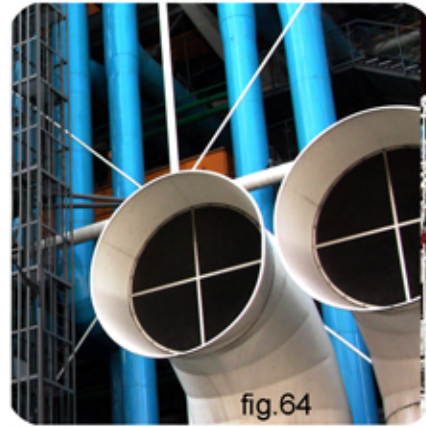


fig.64

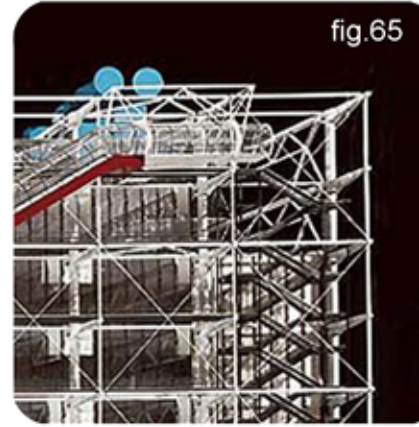


fig.65



fig.66

“Exposing the structure’s framework imbues the garment with a new sense of integrity based on the transparency it projects.” (Quinn, 2003:64)

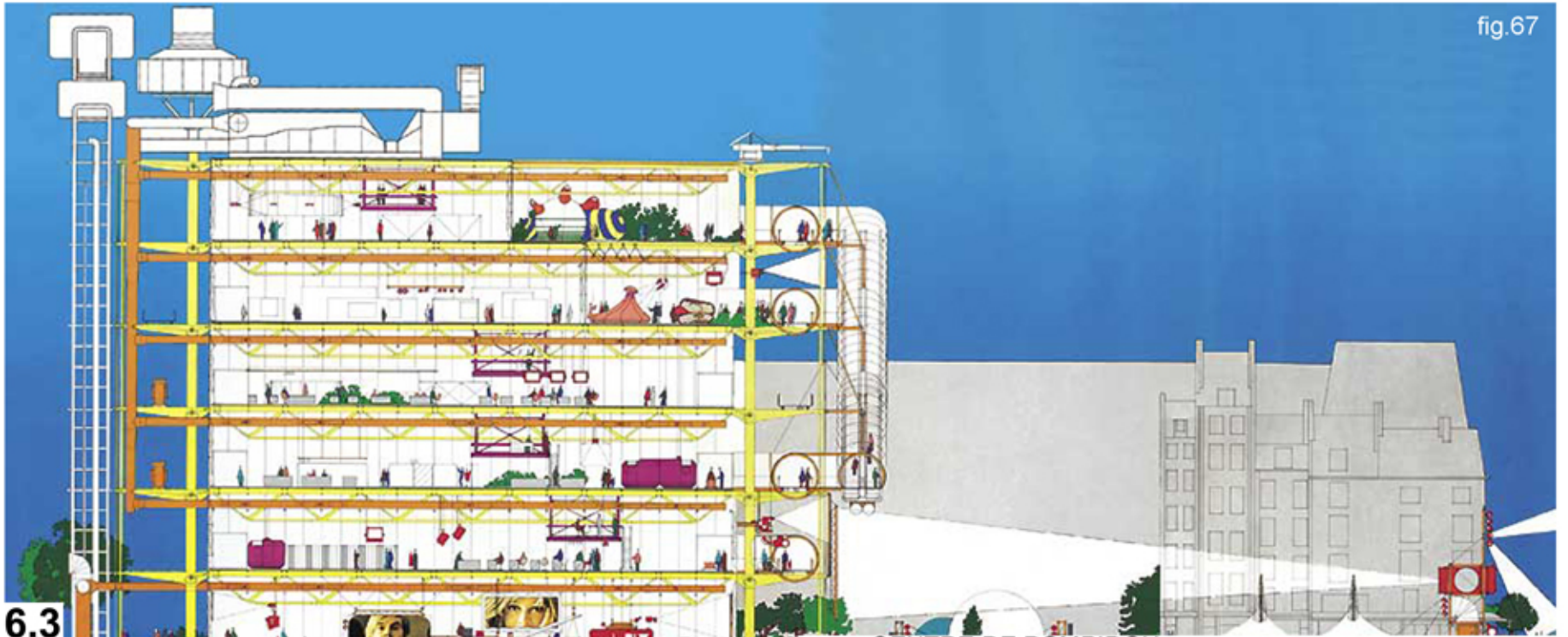


fig.67

6.3

design precedent

CENTRE DE POMPIDOU

Paris, France / Richard Rogers & Renzo F



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA



fig.69

TATTOO HOUSE
Australia
Andrew Maynard Architects

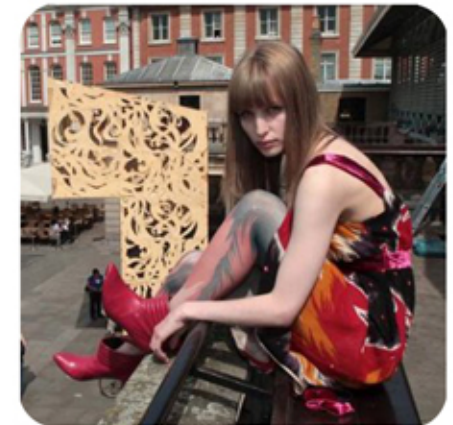


fig.70

AI CAFE
Okinawa Japan
Klein Dytham Architecture



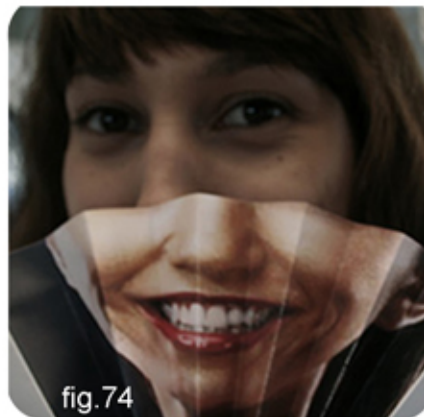
fig.71



HAIRYWOOD TOWER
London / 6a architects



6.4
design precedent skin



By allowing the public to view inside KNOOP through permeable skins, designers from other professions can be inspired by what they see and users of the building can be introduced to alternative methods of production.

By revealing that there are parallels between the design professions, competitiveness between designers are strengthened and experiences elevated to add more value to the urban context.

Quinn believes that architecture should “adopt the codes of revealing and concealing more common to the conventions of fashion” in order for the built environment to “camouflage the shortcomings of the infrastructure it conceals.” (2003:235)

He focusses our attention on this continual viewing of others when he remarks that “both fashion and architecture presumes the presence of a public that watches and must be watched.” (2003:233) By using glass and screens in KNOOP, people and actions on the inside are “exposed, but protected.” (2003:233)

It consequently becomes transparent that the success of how the building reveals certain things and conceals other aspects, happens through its envelope. It’s envelope that is open, and to quote Norberg-Schulz (1980:63) make the space appear as “part of a more comprehensive totality.”

The totality in this case being the S.T.A.R.T. precinct, that include the civic functions of an urban park in which it is situated as well as the educational functions of the art precinct of which it is a collaborator.

6.5

reveal and conc



**The creative process:
“The unspoken assumption of
all design is that it results in a
‘finished’ product. Yet fashion
designers and architects
continually question this
principle, asking if an object
can ever be considered wholly
complete?”**

Peter Eisenman in conversation with
Charles Jencks in ‘The New Paradigm and
September 11th’ *Architectural Design*, 72(4)

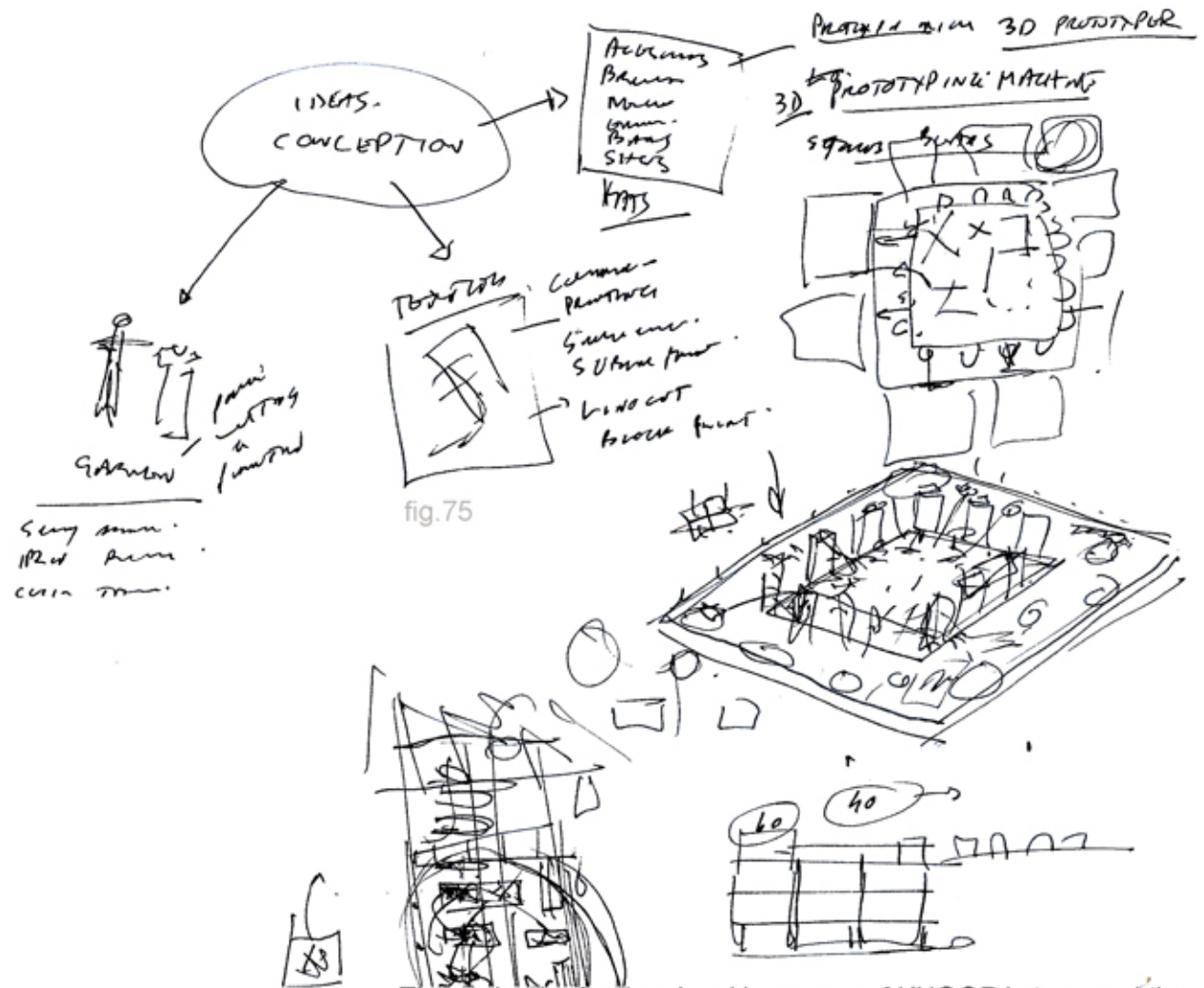


fig.75

The main aim for the visual language of KNOOP is to reveal the creative process of the fashion design industry.

Just as a designer has a creative process that starts off loose and creative and becomes more structured as the product is designed, KNOOP also starts off as a punctured structure that becomes more rigid towards the end.

By revealing certain aspects that are normally concealed, the boundaries of the building are blurred and the user is enticed to take a look closer.

6.6

creative process

“It is a bit like being an architect. I look at the minimum requirements. In the case of an architect it is to construct a building. With a garment, it has to go over the head; the arms have to come through and be able to move, same with the legs. In a way those are my only constraints. There’s going to be other limitations later on, so I try to get rid of them in the beginning. Like a house needs a door, you need to get in and out, and after that it is how it’s achieved that is open to interpretation.” Shelley Fox (Quinn, 2003:223)