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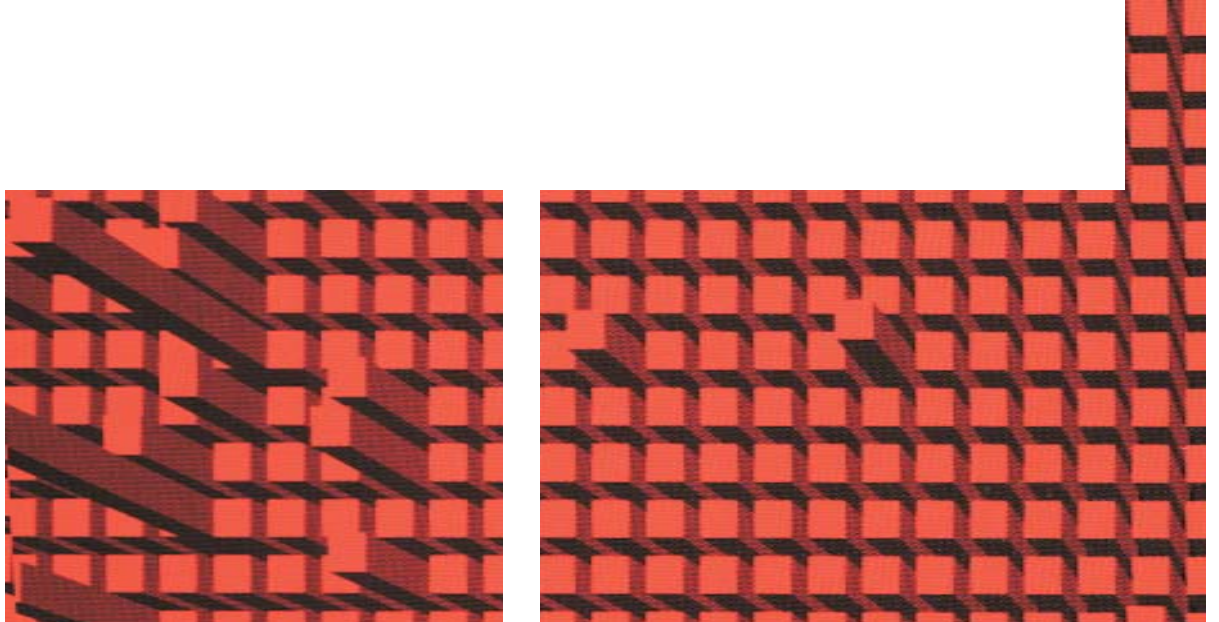
by despina athienides

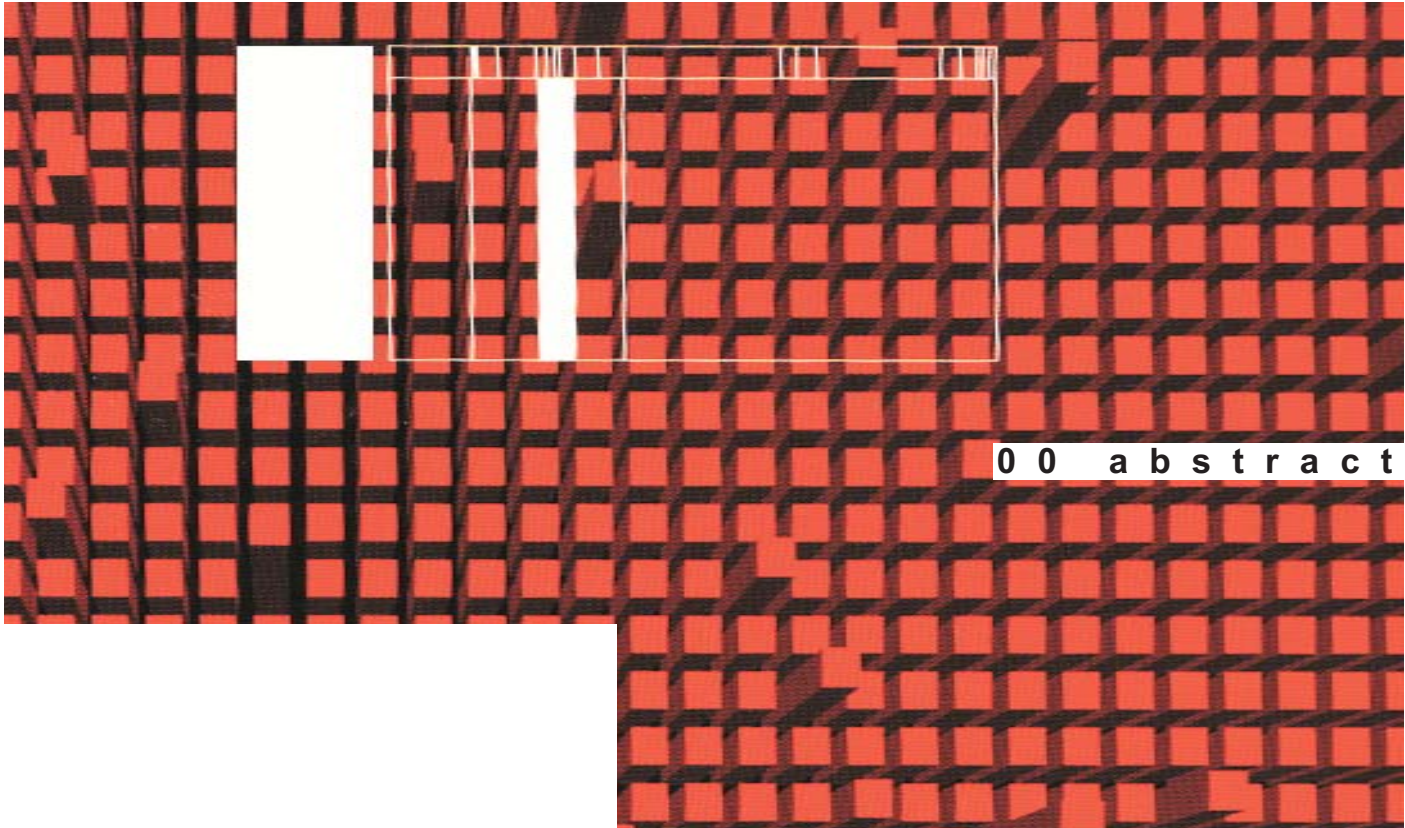


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The challenge of this project is to turn a large residual empty space into a public place, a truly 'relational space'.

The site was decided upon first, and within its vastness, the spirit of the surroundings arose which in turn gave birth to the development of the building programme. At the stage where a site was chosen, no particular functional theme other than that of "adaptive reuse" existed. Located in the industrial sector of Pretoria West, the site was chosen for its ability to stun the visitor to silence with its scale and grandeur. Currently housing the Pretoria West Power Station, the visitor is confronted by structures which appear to be beyond the realm of human interaction.

The dissertation explores the transformation of an 'urban void' to a public place where events can be held. This proposed events centre thrusts the landscape into the intervention, blurring the thresholds between inside and outside. The building itself has little regard for the boundaries imposed on it by the site. Purposely ignoring these limitations, the building extends its boundaries over the lake, creating space above untouched territory.

The site is difficult to perceive and experience as one entity, or even to be understood in one instance, therefore the visitor is encouraged to experience the smaller moments of the site. Thus the design aims to fragment the intervention into smaller experiences, which allows the visitor to engage more intimately with the intervention. This project addresses the issues of visual contact. It reveals the thresholds as environments with degrees of transparency and projection, rather than as tangible boundaries.

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