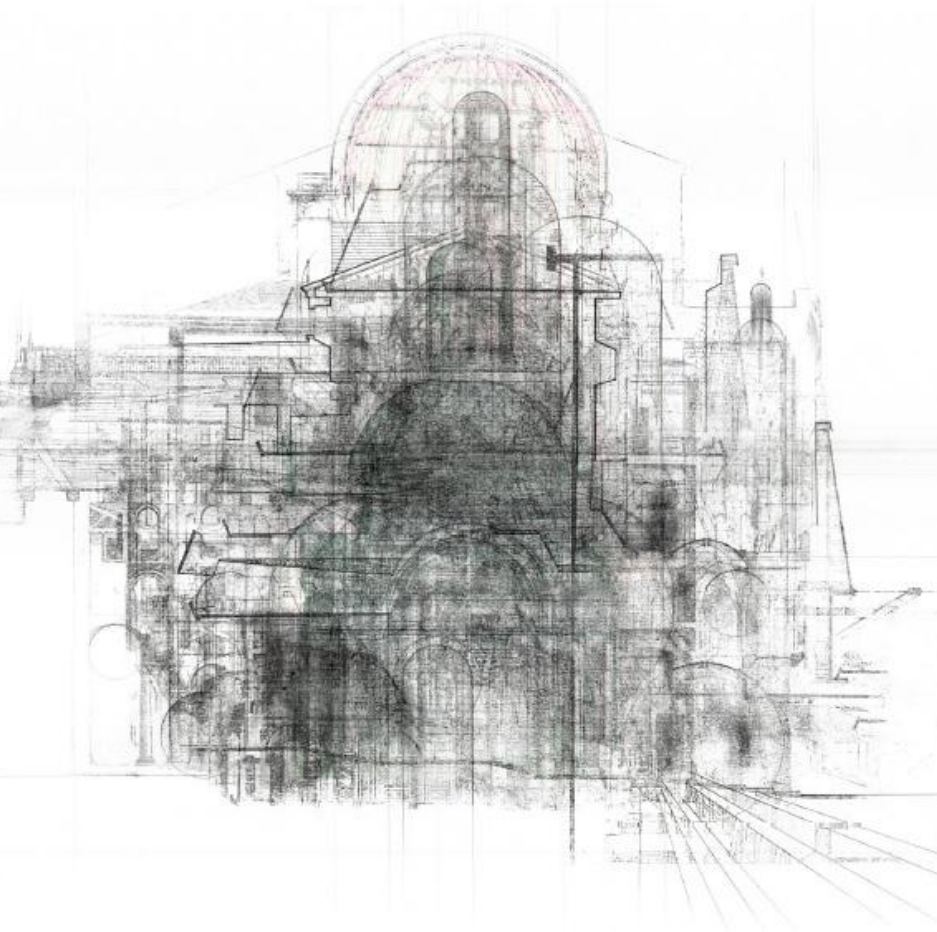




Cosmology of Time: Space of Temporal Inhabitants

Thesis by: Charles Schmidt

Discussed by: Kyle McMIndes



Thesis Argument

Questions:

How can the presence of narrative in the design process challenge the idea of a singular author?

How does our understanding of time begin to inform our space making?

How can time theories inform how architects consider and manifest spaces to reflect and manipulate time?

The thesis attempts to argue that time can be an effective means with which to discuss and inform space making. Time is discussed through material terms and or personified so as to give it a physical and ideological presence.

The argument and questions posed initially are clear and straightforward but the work and narratives that follow happen to be very abstracted. This leaves a bit of disconnect between the Thesis's supposed intent and the actual product made. The only question addressed clearly is the one regarding narrative in the design process, the other and arguably more prevalent questions seem to be clouded in competing views on the subject matter and various modes of production and representation.

Literature Review

Within Charles' Thesis there is no traditional portion devoted to a Literature Review. The Literature Review is meant to be substituted by the extensive footnoting that occurs throughout his Narratives. This footnoting is so extensive in certain cases it takes up more than half of the page, growing to a scale beyond that of the actual thesis writing.

There is a high number of varying texts that are referenced within this Thesis which makes it very unclear. There are references to scientific, spiritual, architectural, artistic, psychological, and historical texts throughout the writing, with little to no sense of hierarchy. In addition to this many of the things being footnoted are not discussed at the length that they deserve, some very large and interesting concepts are merely brushed upon.

The narrative aspect makes the work very enjoyable to read but this comes at the price of a lack of clarity on the side of research. The topic is too broad and far too many viewpoints are incorporated into the text, in some ways the writings may have been better off with the footnotes removed entirely or if the author was to be more critical and specific about themes incorporated.

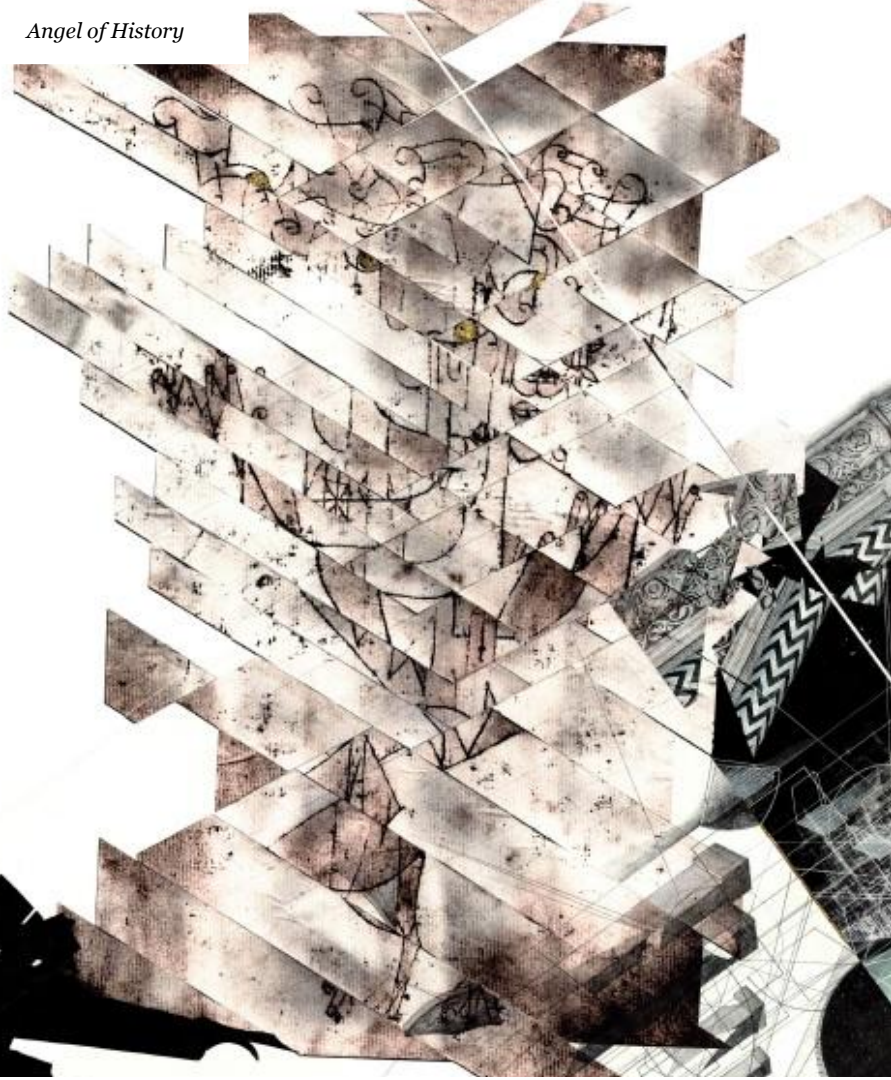


Methods / Procedures

The methods utilized within the Thesis are fairly clear, Charles intends to write narratives attempting to explore time as a spatial condition and then supplement those narratives with speculative forms of drawing. The narratives themselves are very intriguing as well as entertaining and the drawings are objectively beautiful and work well as a form of speculation upon the tales put forth.

Within the method of drawing however there are some curious disconnects that disrupt the overall work. First of which being the act of drawing itself, there are an incredible number of ways in which one can draw that utilize various techniques and conveys various ideas. The author did not specify as to why certain drawing styles were utilized for some characters or why various techniques needed to be utilized at all.

Another unappealing incident within the Thesis was the occurrence of a character whom had no drawing technique, merely stills of the Sagrada Família. The “Brute” as this character was known was synonymous with inconsistency, change, and the ad-hoc; but was compared to the Sagrada Família a building that in fact intensely designed and a modern marvel that has taken over a century to reach its near completion.



Results

The final result of this Thesis was the compilation of both drawings and narratives into a single book. The two creative acts pair well with each other and add a depth to the work that would not be present had only one or the other been produced.

Even though this compilation is very intriguing if we refer back to the earlier questions posed near the Abstract only one is effectively covered in my opinion. That one being the question of narrative in regards to the singular author, within a narrative wherein which a character exists, the question of authorship falls into questions because in many ways the character takes on a leading role of their own and are also subjected to influence by outside forces, immediately implying the role of separate authors and actors within the piece.

In regards to the subject of time as an architectural informant or a space making tool, I feel that was less resolved. From what I could gather both in the writings and drawings time had been turned into something more along the lines of a conceptual abstract or character of which to describe. This is not necessarily a bad thing and it may in fact be more intriguing that time be left as an abstract, but the questions posed seem to suggest the work was looking to go beyond that into something more tangible.



Results

The Thesis that Charles put forward was very ambitious and very entertaining. He attempted to tackle some of the most trying theories known and push them through the lens of Architecture. The narratives were both engaging and imaginative and the drawings were well crafted and totally entrancing.

The themes attempted to be corralled however may have proven to be too much and the work lacked an architectural hierarchy and sense of clarity as to what aspects of time were relevant to either his interests or architecture in general.

There were also disconnects that were discussed earlier in these slides in regards to both the literature review and the methods applied. If I were to make some very clear suggestions on what it is I feel could have been improved it would be as follows.

- A more specific aspect of time or time theory should have been focused on.
- A more spatial based narrative as opposed to more character based.
- A higher sense of precision in texts referenced and more in depth discussions on the theories or scientific truths being utilized. (Perhaps an entirely separate text)
- A more in depth discussion on the act of drawing and the decision to utilize different styles and techniques.

