

a thing re | sembling a win • dow

Bridget Conn
McLean Fahnestock
Ursula Gullow
Dana Hargrove
Anna Helgeson
Leigh-Ann Pahapill

a collective exhibition of



window

re/production|re/presentation

Asheville Area Arts Council
Grove Arcade, Asheville, NC
May 20 - June 25, 2016

Links to on-line artist resources

Bridget Conn

<http://www.bridgetconnartstudio.net/>

McLean Fahnestock

<http://www.mcleanfahnestock.com/>

Ursula Gullow

<http://ursulagullow.com/home.html>

<http://ursulagullow.tumblr.com/>

Dana Hargrove

<http://danahargrove.com/>

Anna Helgeson

<http://www.themap.org/uncategorized/artist-profile-anna-helgeson/>

<http://www.reframingphotography.com/artists/anna-helgeson>

Leigh-Ann Pahapill

<http://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/school-of-art/faculty-staff/LeighAnnPahapillNew.html>

<https://vimeo.com/user3766030/videos>

Supplemental Text
Leigh-Ann Pahapill (with Paul Valdez)

Unconformity Redux



"The "Classic" view of Siccar Point with the angular unconformity between the Late Devonian Old Red Sandstone (dipping gently to the left) and the underlying Silurian turbidites (vertical beds at right).

Craig Jones, Professor, Geological Sciences, the University of Colorado, "Subtly Siccar"
<https://grumpygeophysicist.wordpress.com/2015/07/27/subtly-siccar/>

"The first encounter with a glitch comes hand in hand with a feeling of shock, with being lost and in awe. The glitch is a powerful interruption that shifts an object away from its flow and ordinary discourse, towards the ruins of destroyed meaning. This concept of flow I emphasize as both a trait within the machine as well as a feature of society as a whole. DeLanda distinguishes between chaotic disconnected flows and stable flows of matter that move in continuous variations, conveying singularities. DeLanda draws here on Deleuze and Guattari, who describe flow in terms of the beliefs and desires that both stimulate and maintain society. They write that a flow is something that comes into existence over long periods of time. Within these periods, conventions are established, while deviations tend to become rare occurrences and are often (mis)understood as accidents (or glitches). Although meaningful aspects of everyday life might in fact be disclosed within these rare fluctuations, their impact or relevance is often likely to be ruled out, because of social tendencies to put emphasis on the norm... Rather than creating the illusion of a transparent, well-working interface to information, the glitch captures the machine revealing itself...flow seems natural, but is in fact strictly guided by larger corporations and powers. When a (televisual) flow breaks, the user comes to witness only shreds of the flow through which the message is normally transmitted, while the machinic functions that are conventionally relied upon – as obfuscated –are revealed. When a supposedly transparent interface is damaged in this way, the viewer is momentarily relocated to a void of meaning."

Rosa Menkman, *The Glitch Momentum: Network Notebook Series* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2011), 29
PDF e-book

"We have the satisfaction to find, that in nature there is wisdom, system and consistency. For having, in the natural history of this earth, seen a succession of worlds, we may from this conclude that, there is a system in nature; in like manner as, from seeing revolutions of the planets, it is concluded, that there is a system by which they are intended to continue those revolutions. But if the succession of worlds is established

in the system of nature, it is vain to look for anything higher in the origin of the earth. The result, therefore, of our present enquiry is, that we find no vestige of a beginning - no prospect of an end."

James Hutton, 'Theory of the Earth', Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 1788, 1, 304
http://todayinsci.com/H/Hutton_James/HuttonJames-Quotations.htm

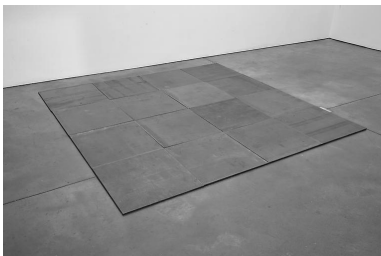


Limestone ammonite fossil. Cast (original shell buried, form cast in sediment) Found in Big Bend area of Texas (10" w x 5" h x 3" d) Found 2004

Slate ammonite fossil, Relief (original shell buried, relief sculpture) Death Assemblage (5" h x 5 1/2" w x 3/4" d) Preserved, purchased at a gift shop.

"Taphonomy is concerned with the information content of the fossil record and the processes by which fossils are incorporated into the fossil record. Traditionally, taphonomists and non-taphonomists alike have emphasized information loss, but with the publication of Behrensmeyer and Kidwell's (1985) seminal paper, there has been a groundswell of research about information gain. The fossil record is a rich source of information about phenomena that occur over temporal scales that far exceed those of a human generation, and that often occur so slowly that they appear constant to us, if we are cognizant of them at all; moreover, the stratigraphic record suggests that we cannot simply scale upward from ecological to geological scales. The fossil record is, then, a rich source of environmental information, including that on scales of decades to centuries - scales that encompass multiple biological surveys from which the "noise" of short-term fluctuations has been filtered by taphonomic process. But if this information is to be understood meaningfully in a (paleo) environmental context (whatever the spatiotemporal scale), we must be cognizant of the filters involved in recording it."

Ronald E. Martin, *Taphonomy: A Process Approach* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Xiii

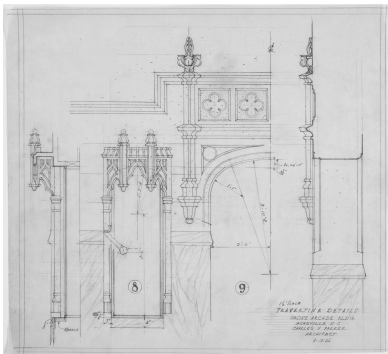


Carl Andre, *4th Steel Square*, 2008. Hot rolled steel plates. Overall: 3/8 x 78.74 x 78.74 inches. 16 units, each 3/8 x 19.69 x 19.69 inches

"My first problem has been to find a set of particles...and then to combine them according to laws which are particular to each particle, rather than a law which is applied to the whole set... The units are combined in ways that "are no more than the qualities

that any one particle may have”... As to truth to materials, I just like matter a great deal and the different properties of matter, the different forms of matter, different elements, different materials. To paint these things, for me, would be to exactly defeat my own desires as to my art...I always felt just the opposite of that idealized surface. I wanted a surface free to be continually altered by its own history, the events which occurred to it up to the point of absolute obliteration, I suppose. If you leave a steel piece out in the rain and the wind for three hundred years, it would probably rust away. If it did rust away, the grass would probably have a different pattern from where the rust was because of the high iron content in the soil at that place. Nothing ever truly disappears...By nature, I am a materialist, an admirer of Lucretius. It is exactly these impingements upon our sense of touch and so forth that I am interested in. The sense of one’s own being in the world confirmed by the existence of things and others in the world. This, to me, is far beyond being as an idea. This is a recognition, a state of being, a state of consciousness...”

Phyllis Tuchman, “An Interview with Carl Andre,” *Artforum* 8:10 (June 1970): 55 - 58



Travertine Details, (Grove Arcade, Asheville, N.C.) MC 00383 Flat Folder 6, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University Libraries

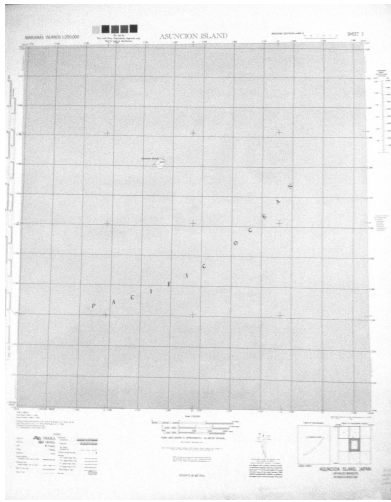
“Construction of the Grove Arcade, conceived as a shopping mall with a multi-story office tower, was started in 1926 under the financial guidance of E.W. Grove, builder of the Grove Park Inn and the new Battery Park Hotel. The architect was Charles N. Parker. After Grove’s death in January 1927, work was temporarily suspended until the following year, when Grove’s estate transferred the property to Walter P. Taylor & Associates. Completed in 1929, with the office tower greatly reduced, the building stands as a fitting tribute to Grove, whom many call “the father of modern Asheville.”

Brilliantly covered in ivory-colored granite blocks and glazed terra cotta elements, depicting Gothic and Tudor motifs, the structure, located at 1 Page Avenue, covers an entire city block. Utilizing the slope of the lot, Parker transformed the structure from two stories in the north to two stories plus a mezzanine level in the south. The cornice/parapet, containing heart-shaped terra cotta tracery, carries around the entire building, interrupted at each of the four barrel-vault entrances by panels containing the word “GROVE.”

The north entrance features winged lions guarding twin ramps to the roof deck. The walls above the ramps contain stylized depictions of medieval laborers, including one for

the architect Parker. Windows are the large display type on the first floor, double-hung windows topped with Tudor hood moldings in the tower.”

Richard Hansley, *Asheville's Historic Architecture* (Charleston, NC: The History Press, 2011), 84-85.



“A single large asymmetrical stratovolcano, steeper on the NE side, forms 3-km-wide Asuncion Island. The steep NE flank of the 857-m-high volcano terminates in high sea cliffs. The gentler SW flanks have low-angle slopes bounded by sea cliffs only a few meters high. The southern flank of the volcano is cut by a large landslide scar. The southern flanks and western flanks of the volcano are mantled by ash deposits that may have originated during eruptions in historical time. An explosive eruption in 1906 also produced lava flows that descended about half-way down the western and SE flanks, but several other historical eruption reports are of uncertain validity.”

Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History Global Volcanism Program
<http://volcano.si.edu/volcano.cfm?vn=284150>

Global Volcanism Program, 2013. Asuncion (284150) in *Volcanoes of the World*, v. 4.4.3. Venzke, E (ed.). Smithsonian Institution. Downloaded 15 May 2016 (<http://volcano.si.edu/volcano.cfm?vn=284150>).
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5479/si.GVP.VOTW4-2013>

“What is challenged or brought forward in the case of the void is the idea of authorship itself, which, prior to this supposedly voiding moment, was in fact neutralized from media-cultural experience. It is possible to realize at this point—and only belatedly— that the conventions of ‘the seamless surface of the networked media spectacle itself, and its illusion of stability’ tend to foreclose any sense of authorship whatsoever. In media accidents like these, the void involves the unknown – that which cannot be described or planned for. These empty spaces of non-understanding trigger a horror vacui: a fear of voids to which nothing else can be compared and that is beyond all possibilities of calculation, measurement or imitation. However, these terrifying voids also create a form of counter-experience, a negative pleasure that is not so different from the proto-modern, aesthetic conception of the sublime (described as early as 1693 in John Dennis’

writings on the Alps), as contradictory and immense 'delight that is consistent with reason' but yet, 'mingled with Horrors, and sometimes almost with despair'. Like in this 'nature'-generated sublime, the glitch is an uncanny or overwhelming experience of unforeseen incomprehension. Experiencing a glitch is often like perceiving a stunningly beautiful, brightly colored, complex landscape of unexplainable, unfathomable and otherworldly images and data structures. A glitch represents a loss of control. The 'world' or the interface does the unexpected. It goes beyond the borders of its known and programmed territories, changing viewers' assumptions about technology and its assumed functions (as was for instance the case during the September 11 broadcast), and comes to seem profoundly irrational in its 'behavior'. The glitch makes the computer itself suddenly appear unconventionally deep, in contrast to the more banal, predictable surface-level behaviors of 'normal' machines and systems. In this way, glitches announce a crazy and dangerous kind of moment(um) instantiated and dictated by the machine itself.

The concept of moment(um) is twofold: first of all there is the moment, which is experienced as the uncanny, threatening loss of control, throwing the spectator into the void (of meaning). This moment then itself becomes a catalyst, with a certain momentum. Noise turns to glitch when it passes a momentary tipping point, at which it could tip away into a failure, or instead force new knowledge about the glitch's techné, and actual and presumed media flows, onto the viewer.

Through the distorted images and behaviors of machinic outputs, the viewer is thrown into a more risky realm of image and non-image, meaning and non-meaning, truth and interpretation. The machine no longer behaves in the way the technology was supposed to. It's glitching interface, strange sounds, and broken behavioral patterns introduce tension into user intentions; an astonishing image (or sound) must be somehow negotiated amidst a normally much more boring masquerade of human computer relations. Though at first the viewer reacts with shock and perceives the experience as a loss, the glitch cannot be subdued as a solid state of perception. Just as the understanding of a glitch changes once it is named, so does the notion of transparency or systemic equilibrium supposedly damaged by the glitch itself. The 'original' experience of rupture is moved beyond its sublime moment(um) and vanishes into a realm of new conditions. The glitch has become a new mode; and its previous uncanny encounter has come to register as an ephemeral, personal experience of a machine."

Rosa Menkman, *The Glitch Momentum: Network Notebook Series* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2011), 29-31 PDF e-book

Excerpts compiled by Leigh-Ann Pahapill and Paul Valdez

Supplemental Notes & Sketches
Dana Hargrove



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enneth Clark, *Landscape into Art* (Boston,
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ape: *Country—City—Capital*, ed. Simon
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as such, 'readable' like any other cultural

O N E

W. J. T. MITCHELL

Imperial Landscape

(contemporary essay)

Theses on Landscape

1. Landscape is not a genre of art but a medium.
2. Landscape is a medium of exchange between the human and the natural, the self and the other. As such, it is like money: good for nothing in itself, but expressive of a potentially limitless reserve of value.
3. Like money, landscape is a social hieroglyph that conceals the actual basis of its value. It does so by naturalizing its conventions and conventionalizing its nature.
4. Landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture. It is both a represented and presented space, both a signifier and a signified, both a frame and what a frame contains, both a real place and its simulacrum, both a package and the commodity inside the package. *frame of Reference*
5. Landscape is a medium found in all cultures.
6. Landscape is a particular historical formation associated with European imperialism.
7. Theses 5 and 6 do not contradict one another.
8. Landscape is an exhausted medium, no longer viable as a mode of artistic expression. Like life, landscape is boring; we must not say so.
9. The landscape referred to in Thesis 8 is the same as that of Thesis 6.

the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of all these men's farms, yet to this their land-deeds give them no title.

—Emerson, *Nature* (1836)

I have been assuming throughout these pages that landscape is best understood as a medium of cultural expression, not a genre of painting or fine art. It is now time to explain exactly what this means. There certainly is a genre of painting known as landscape, defined very loosely by a certain emphasis on natural objects as subject matter. What we tend to forget, however, is that this "subject matter" is not simply raw material to be represented in paint but is always already a symbolic form in its own right. The familiar categories that divide the genre of landscape painting into subgenres—notions such as the Ideal, the Heroic, the Pastoral, the Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque—are all distinctions based, not in ways of putting paint on canvas, but in the kinds of objects and visual spaces that may be represented by paint.²⁶

Landscape painting is best understood, then, not as the uniquely central medium that gives us access to ways of seeing landscape, but as a representation of something that is already a representation in its own right.²⁷ Landscape may be represented by painting, drawing, or engraving; by photography, film, and theatrical scenery; by writing, speech, and presumably even music and other "sound images." Before all these secondary representations, however, landscape is itself a physical and multisensory medium (earth, stone, vegetation, water, sky, sound and silence, light and darkness, etc.) in which cultural meanings and values are encoded, whether they are put there by the physical transformation of a place in landscape gardening and architecture, or found in a place formed, as we say, "by nature." The simplest way to summarize this point is to note that it makes Kenneth Clark's title, *Landscape into Art*, quite redundant: landscape is already artifice in the moment of its beholding, long before it becomes the subject of pictorial representation.

Landscape is a medium in the fullest sense of the word. It is a material "means" (to borrow Aristotle's terminology) like language or paint, embedded in a tradition of cultural signification and communication, a body of symbolic forms capable of being invoked and reshaped to express meanings and values. As a medium for expressing value, it has a semiotic structure rather like that of money, functioning as a special sort of commodity that plays a unique symbolic role in the system of exchange-value. Like money, landscape is good for nothing as a use-value, while serving as a theoretically limitless symbol of value at some other level. At the most

basic, vulgar level, the value of landscape expresses itself in a specific price: the added cost of a beautiful view in real estate value; the price of a plane ticket to the Rockies, Hawaii, the Alps, or New Zealand. Landscape is a marketable commodity to be presented and re-presented in "packaged tours," an object to be purchased, consumed, and even brought home in the form of souvenirs such as postcards and photo albums. In its double role as commodity and potent cultural symbol, landscape is the object of fetishistic practices involving the limitless repetition of identical photographs taken on identical spots by tourists with interchangeable emotions.

As a fetishized commodity, landscape is what Marx called a "social hieroglyph," an emblem of the social relations it conceals. At the same time that it commands a specific price, landscape represents itself as "beyond price," a source of pure, inexhaustible spiritual value. "Landscape," says Emerson, "has no owner," and the pure viewing of landscape for itself is spoiled by economic considerations: "you cannot freely admire a noble landscape, if laborers are digging in the field hard by."²⁸ Raymond Williams notes that "a working country is hardly ever a landscape," and John Barrell has shown the way laborers are kept in the "dark side" of English landscape to keep their work from spoiling the philosophical contemplation of natural beauty.²⁹ "Landscape" must represent itself, then, as the antithesis of "land," as an "ideal estate" quite independent of "real estate," as a "poetic" property, in Emerson's phrase, rather than a material one. The land, real property, contains a limited quantity of wealth in minerals, vegetation, water, and dwelling space. Dig out all the gold in a mountainside, and its wealth is exhausted. But how many photographs, postcards, paintings, and awestruck "sightings" of the Grand Canyon will it take to exhaust its value as landscape? Could we fill up Grand Canyon with its representations? How do we exhaust the value of a medium like landscape? Can we?

Landscape is a medium not only for expressing value but also for expressing meaning, for communication between persons—most radically, for communication between the Human and the non-Human. Landscape mediates the cultural and the natural, or "Man" and "Nature," as eighteenth-century theorists would say. It is not only a natural scene, and not just a representation of a natural scene, but a natural representation of a natural scene, a trace or icon of nature in nature itself, as if nature were imprinting and encoding its essential structures on our perceptual apparatus. Perhaps this is why we place a special value on landscapes with lakes or reflecting pools. The reflection exhibits Nature representing itself to itself, displaying an identity of the Real and the Imaginary that certifies the reality of our own images.³⁰

The desire for this certificate of the Real is clearest in the rhetoric of

Explained
in book
more

How?

as is the corollary precept that an individual's consciousness is profoundly shaped by the cultural community to which one belongs. Yet, despite this awareness that every judgment made about some part of the world "out there" is inescapably subjective and value-laden, aesthetic predispositions, preferences, and prejudices often remain unexamined. While it is certainly not possible for individuals or social groups within a given culture to inventory and analyze with scientific objectivity the whole range of values that inform their evaluations of a variety of experiences, the task of exploring the origins, history, and evolution of shared values is indispensable to understanding ourselves. With respect to the physical environment specifically, an understanding of why we are inclined to make a specific set of values the basis of environmental assessment and decision making may liberate us from the false conviction that our judgments and actions are based on rigorously objective and inviolate standards.

This essay explores the origins of the high priority that Western Europeans and Americans place upon the way places look, based on our expectation that to be considered "beautiful" or "well designed," a readable and traditional formal ordering of visual elements should be present. While it would be absurd to suggest that we can or should ignore the dominant role that seeing plays in most human encounters with the environment, the translation of visual sensory dominance into specific aesthetic values is a consequence of culture, not of nature. Moreover, if an almost exclusive investment of value in visual and compositional values blinds us to other potential attributes of the landscapes we experience, we are left poorer for our failure to discover and exploit additional—and in some cases alternative—sources of aesthetic satisfaction. Obviously, too, design and policy decisions based on a culturally conditioned aesthetic canon whose premises remain largely unexamined simply perpetuate environmental biases that may actually subvert ecological and/or social goods.

McLuhan traced the historic roots of our preoccupation with visual values and highly structured spatial compositions to a revolution in the representation of images and of space that occurred in the Renaissance. He believed that the fifteenth-century invention of movable type was conceptually linked to the invention or re-discovery of the optical science of perspective by Renaissance artists and architects. Both of these devices involved a linear, uniform, and continuously replicable process that defined the world in visual terms and emphasized a fixed point of view and a detached observer/reader. Renaissance perspective figured forth a visual paradigm of spatial order derived from formal units of measurement, dominated by vertical and horizontal axes, and characterized by symmetry and harmonious balance of parts within a unified whole.

McLuhan's playful comment on the hierarchical structuring of this simulacrum ("A piazza for everything and everything in its piazza") is, however, well

order = beautiful
 wood + America

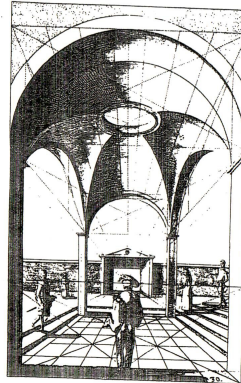


FIG. 37. Illustration from Hans Vredeman de Vries, *Perspective Dons ist Die Weit berienhte Kunst . . .* (The illustrious art of perspective) (Leiden, 1604). IDC by Microform Publishers.

supported by John White's painstaking analysis of the intentions and effects of Renaissance illusionistic perspective in *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space*. White makes the point that the achievement of verisimilitude made possible by the new techniques for counterfeiting the appearance of real three-dimensional space on a planar surface was not more revolutionary than the achievement of a new kind of pictorial organization. The subordination of all objects to a single set of rules is far more than a mere device for closer imitation of the natural world. The measured relationship between each element of the pictorial world is a potent factor in increasing the unity of the composition, as well as its realism.³³

What began in Renaissance painting as an extraordinary artistic transfiguration of the everyday world of experience inevitably came to condition the ordinary expectations of what the observing eye—that fixed point determining the lines along which forms were dispersed in perspective space—should perceive in the real environment outside the frame of the picture. The idealized formal order in a painted landscape or urban scene suggested a model for the design of actual spaces, for buildings and streets and gardens, even for large rural estates and entire cities. First came the conceptual framework of the plan, imposing an ab-

cratic. It was fair and square, and easy to understand. The federal survey platted the raw land of the Middle West into square township units measuring six miles on each side. These were divided into thirty-six square-mile "sections" of 640 acres each. At first, only full sections were sold, but eventually the quarter section (160 acres) became the standard, since it was considered the ideal size for a family farm. Over five million farms were platted on public lands between 1800 and 1900.²

Expeditious as it was—indeed, it is hard to imagine a more rational method—the national grid had some serious drawbacks. It failed to take account of topography. The relentlessly straight section lines followed the compass, marching through swamps, across rivers, and over hill-tops, "a transcontinental triumph of the abstract over the particular," in the words of architect Daniel Solomon.³ In terms of rural life, the grid institutionalized the trend toward scattered farms, rather than agricultural villages, giving physical expression to the powerful myth that only lone individuals mattered in America. The new towns of the Middle West were more often than not laid out on grids that echoed the larger U.S. survey grid of the surrounding countryside, with some unfortunate results. The grid was primarily concerned with the squares of private property that lay within the gradients, not with gradients themselves, or how the two related with one another. This dictated a way of thinking about the community in which private property was everything and the public realm—namely, the streets that connected all the separate pieces of private property—counted for nothing. This spawned towns composed of blocks unmodified by devices of civic art, checkerboard towns without visible centers, open spaces, odd little corners, or places set aside for the public's enjoyment.

The grid had some salient advantages as a planning scheme for cities. Rectangular lots made for good economy of building. The grid made orientation easy. For example, in New York one was obviously going either up or downtown on numbered streets, and the east-west fix was pretty easy too. The four-way intersections at every block allowed for flexible traffic patterns, particularly with slow-moving horses and wagons.

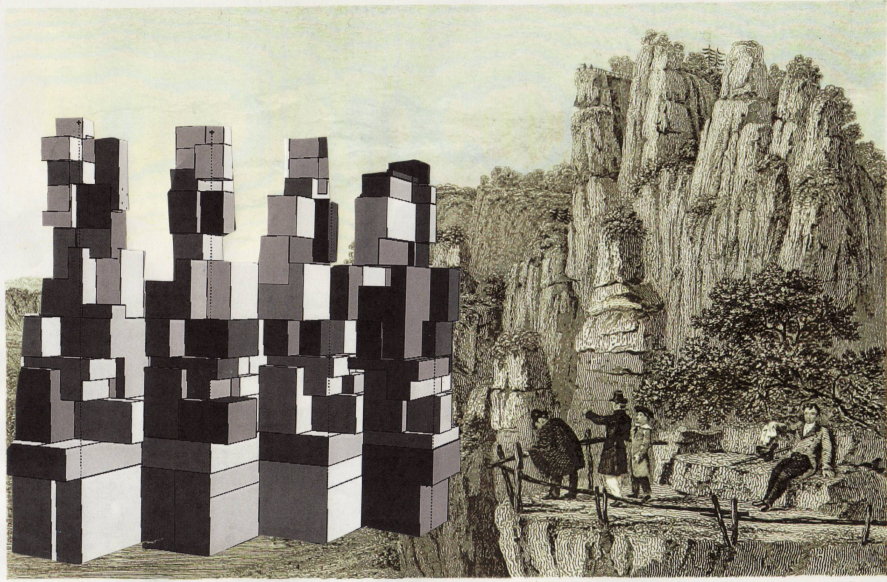
Where the grid's tendency to dulling regularity was modified by planned open space and the siting of civic buildings, the result could be felicitous. In carving Savannah out of the Georgia pine woods, James

Oglethorpe designed a city based on a grid of twenty-four public squares surrounded by blocks of building lots. Each parklike square was to serve as the focus of a neighborhood. The scheme worked so well that twenty of the twenty-four public squares still stand in the old part of the city, just as Oglethorpe laid them out in 1733.

Williamsburg, which sprang up only a few miles from the abandoned settlement at Jamestown, was another fine town that modified the grid in a way that made the most of its formal strengths—coherence, orderliness—while mitigating its worst weakness—the straight line repeated over and over. It achieved this by setting two important focal points—the capitol building and the governor's palace—at the ends of its two main axial streets. So instead of dribbling off into the gloaming, as many gridded main streets in American towns would later do, these streets resolved in celebrations of civic architecture—the eye had something to rest on other than the vacant horizon, and the spirit was soothed by a sense of enclosure. Later, the College of William and Mary would further enhance the scheme by anchoring the other end of Duke of Gloucester Street, opposite the state house.

Philadelphia began as an experiment in town planning that curiously anticipated Levittown in its attempt to create a city out of individual houses on large lots. William Penn's initial idea for a utopian metropolis called for 10,000 acres divided into 10,000 one-acre lots, upon which were to sit 10,000 single-family dwellings, each one to be surrounded by its own gardens and orchards. The transportation problems presented by such a sprawling pattern seem not to have occurred to Penn. The surveyor he sent over found a suitable site on a tongue of land lying between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers that offered excellent potential as a seaport. On the downside, the site comprised only 1300 acres, but Penn went ahead anyway.

His "Holy Experiment" quickly proved too fanciful and abstract. No sooner had Penn doled out the first one-acre parcels than their owners subdivided them and sold them off. Blocks of row houses and warehouses began to go up along the busy waterfront. Penn quickly revised his scheme to include a central square and four other parklike squares geometrically disposed on a grid so that however the inhabitants pleased to build the city, it would always have some feeling of "a green country town."⁴ In a few decades, blocks of three-story row houses, standing



Arch. von Otto Wagner

Quarz von E. Patten

Das Kaserne ist der schillernde Beweis