

energy studies, short-term interests have effectively inhibited anything but the most limited application of such models and one may take it as a reflection of these interests that architectural schools have largely ceased to concern themselves with such matters.

This aloof critique of current design praxis and its pedagogical substance brings us to the question once again of the full nature of the art of building. The present tendency to polarize the quintessence of built form as though it were of necessity one single thing appears to my mind to be nothing other than an ideological refusal to confront historical reality. The building task intrinsically resists such polarization. It remains fatally situated at that phenomenological interface between the infrastructural and superstructural realms of human production. There it ministers to the self-realization of man in nature and mediates as an essential catalyst between the three states of his existence: first, his status as an organism of primal need; second, his status as a sensate, hedonistic being; and finally, his status as a cognitive, self-affirmative consciousness. Autonomous artistic production certainly has its many provinces but the task of *place creation*, in its broadest sense, is not necessarily one of them. The compensatory drive of autonomous art tends to remove it from the concrete realization of man in the world and to the extent that architecture seeks to preempt all culture it consciously divorces itself from both building and the realm of historical reality. This much Adolf Loos has already intimated by 1910, when he wrote with characteristic but understandable overstatement: "Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument."

INTRODUCTION

The Geometry of Feeling: A Look at the
Phenomenology of Architecture
Juhani Pallasmaa

Like Christian Norberg-Schulz, Finnish architect and theorist Juhani Pallasmaa is concerned with architecture's loss of communicative power. This essay, published in Finnish and Danish architectural journals with English translations, establishes a phenomenological position. Meaning in architecture, Pallasmaa asserts, depends on its ability to symbolize human existence or presence, and as modern architects appear to have overlooked, on the spatial experience of the work. Forms themselves are meaningless, but can transmit meaning via images enriched by association. Science and reason, he maintains, have contributed limiting mindsets like analysis, elementalism, and reductionism, with unfortunate consequences for architecture. By contrast, the experience of architecture is synthetic, operating at many levels simultaneously: mental/physical, cultural/biological, collective/individual, etc. Based on readings of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Gaston Bachelard, Pallasmaa formulates a theoretical position about experience's reliance on memory, imagination, and the unconscious.

In "The Phenomenon of Place," Norberg-Schulz asserts that "to dwell in a house is to inhabit the world." This idea of the house as a condensation of broader, worldly experience is echoed in the significance Pallasmaa gives to the dwelling place:

A house in fact is a metaphysical instrument, a mythical tool with which we try to introduce a reflection of eternity into our momentary existence.

The author purports that the richest interpretations come from the simplest archetypal forms: column, gable, arch, dome, tower. Concerns that this indicates a nostalgic, stylistic agenda (postmodern historicism) are contradicted by Pallasmaa's own sensuous, abstract "architecture of silence" and his criticism of postmodern collage as superficial formalism.