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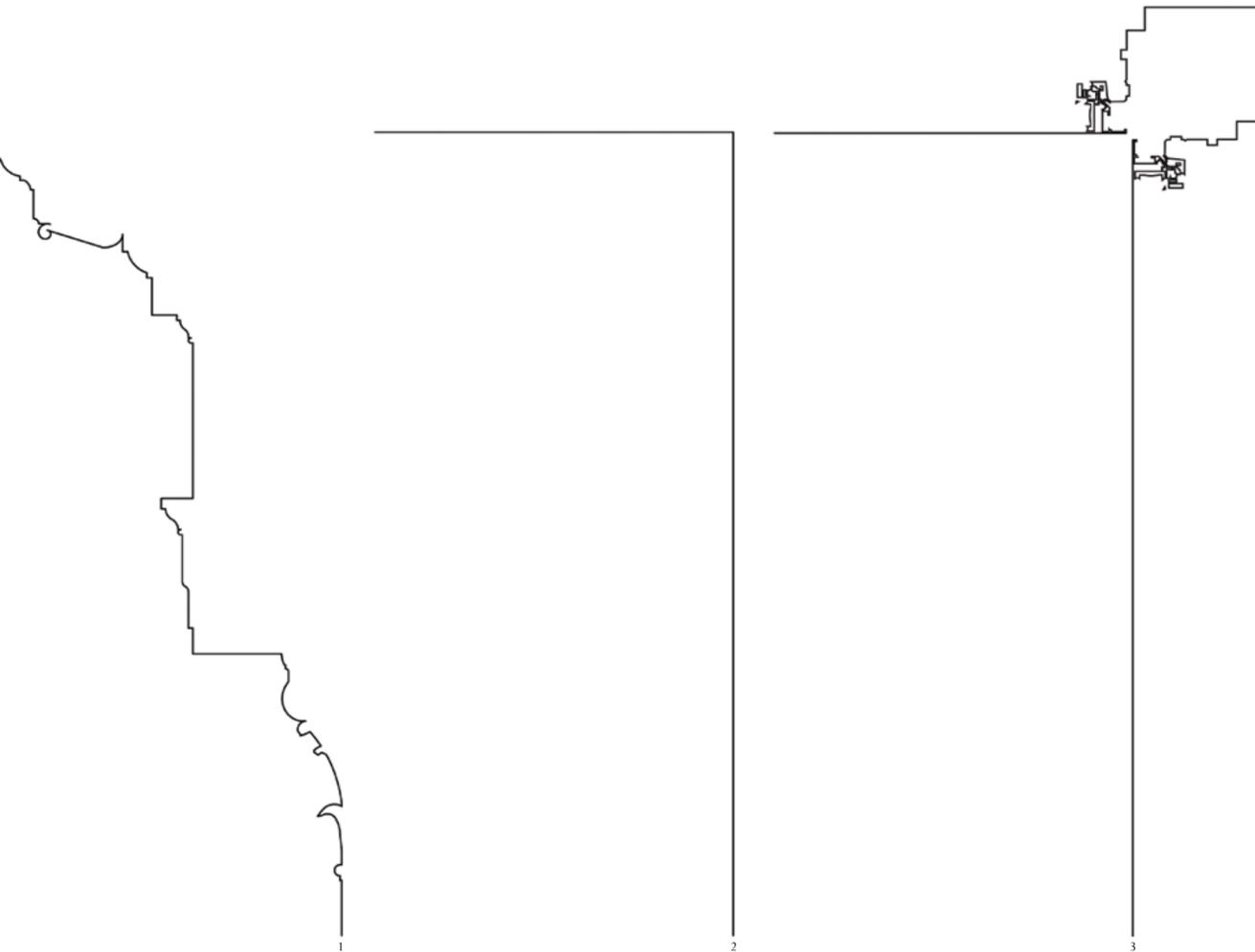
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assembled rather than crafted. However, the appearance of this logic is neither necessary nor effortless; it demands a new hierarchy of visibility to present itself. Today, man-work – the evidence of hand fixing – recedes, to allow machine-work – the factory-produced panel – to advance. Shadow-gaps and flush-fittings are enjoyable because they bury the evidence of fixing – rails, dabs, services, cisterns, etc. - allowing for a fantastic exchangeability of our products.

Architecture appears by organising labour, and is political as it is aesthetic. Architecture establishes policies that create a *distribution of the sensible*¹ – a system of sensible facts that disclose the existence of something in common and define the respective parts and positions within it. Architectural policies establish the terms of work employed by building, and determine the relative visibility of that work, awarding some work a public appearance, and other work obscurity. Historically, architecture has given pride of place to the finesse of decoration over the utility of building, the fantastic image of the machine-work over the evidence of the handcraft, and to the free-floating component over its deflating fixing. Architecture often makes claims concerning its transparency – about its ability to immediately make manifest work as work, without an intervening hierarchy of visibility – claiming to simply present the immanent logic of some kind of material, distribution, fabrication, assembly, maintenance or demolition. However, this appears to be precisely what it can't do; in organising construction, resolving building junctions, architecture can't help but put one kind of work before another.

¹ Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, Continuum, 2004



1. convoluted junction: Internal corner profile, section, Corinthian capital, architrave, frieze and cornice.
2. direct junction: Interior corner profile, plan/section, Villa La Roche/Jeanerret.
3. involuted junction: Interior corner profile, plan/section, Velfac 200 rainscreen, interface for steel frame and aluminium cladding.

Office Time | A Day in the life of an Architecture Practice

Foreign Office Architects & Chris Speed

On the 4th of September 2009, a Twitter account was registered by the London office of Foreign Office Architects. The login details were distributed to all staff, and everybody in the office was asked to Tweet on their activities as they changed throughout the day.

The subsequent stream of information chronologically documented the different range of tasks, jobs and processes that supported the work of the architecture practice. Detailed as though it was a monologue from one individual, the variety of activities hints at the complexity of sustaining a contemporary office.

The FOA Twitter feed is compared against the English monastic summers day that was introduced during the early to mid eleventh century (Burton 1994:160).¹

¹ Burton, J. E. (1994) *Monastic and religious orders in Britain, 1000-1300*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Interior of Gilberts Architects, Edinburgh. Photo: C.Speed © 2009

| | | | |
|--|---|----------------|---|
| | | 1.30 a.m. | Preparation for night office; trina oratio and gradual psalms. |
| | | 2.00 a.m. | <i>Nocturns</i> (night office) (later known as matins) including prayers for the royal family and for the dead. |
| | | 3.30/4.00 a.m. | <i>Matins</i> (lauds) at daybreak; wash and change |
| | | 5.00 a.m. | Trina oratio |
| | | | Reading |
| | | 6.00 a.m. | <i>Prime</i> |
| | | | Morrow Mass; Chapter |
| | | 7.30 a.m. | Work |
| | | 8.00 a.m. | <i>Terce</i> |
| | | | Sung Mass |
| | | 9.30 a.m. | Reading |
| | FOALondon: opened office | 09:00 | |
| | FOALondon: checking email correspondence | 09:07 | |
| | FOALondon: preparing a finishes list for the qs to price | 09:16 | |
| | FOALondon: doing hotel research! | 09:28 | |
| | FOALondon: having breakfast in front of the monitor | 09:31 | |
| | FOALondon: and preparing prints for meeting later | 09:32 | |
| | FOALondon: pick up milk from corner shop | 09:35 | |
| | FOALondon: ok back on finishes... | 09:41 | |
| | FOALondon: update comments on drawings | 09:43 | |
| | FOALondon: talking about water filters | 09:53 | |
| | FOALondon: Research hotels for visiting client | 09:53 | |
| | FOALondon: reading about world architecture festival | 09:53 | |
| | FOALondon: rendering the columns | 09:57 | |
| | FOALondon: learning how to use the twitter... | 09:58 | |
| | FOALondon: updating the diagrams | 09:59 | |
| | FOALondon: moveable walls | 10:03 | |
| | FOALondon: discussing the reconfiguration of an art gallery | 10:03 | |
| | FOALondon: email correspondence | 10:08 | |
| | FOALondon: discuss office cleaning | 10:10 | |
| | FOALondon: figuring out how to say something | 10:21 | |
| | FOALondon: downloading drivers for external hard drive | 10:25 | |
| | FOALondon: finishes again | 10:38 | |
| | FOALondon: correspondence to the bank | 10:41 | |
| | FOALondon: preparing for meeting | 10:47 | |
| | FOALondon: rendering floor mask for color adjustments | 10:49 | |
| | FOALondon: meeting client | 10:55 | |
| | FOALondon: telephone messages | 11:32 | 11.30 a.m. Sext |
| FOALondon: countertop to be plywood and smooth finish mdf backing, high gloss smooth polyurethane epoxy floor coating system ISC Garland or eq | | 12:34 | 12.00 p.m. Dinner |
| FOALondon: distribute post, open post | | 12:47 | |
| FOALondon: how the team will work together | | 12:52 | |
| FOALondon: drawing very nice sections | | 13:01 | c. 1.00 p.m. Siesta |
| FOALondon: searching through old powerpoints for sketches | | 13:08 | |
| FOALondon: organise correspondence in project folder | | 13:08 | |
| FOALondon: photoshopping | | 13:19 | |
| FOALondon: having lunch | | 13:41 | |
| FOALondon: fee discussions | | 13:43 | |
| FOALondon: lunch time | | 13:46 | |
| FOALondon: back from meeting on site | | 13:50 | |
| FOALondon: rendering.... | | 14:12 | |
| FOALondon: telephone messages | | 14:36 | 2.30 p.m. None |
| FOALondon: back to the section after the lunch break... | | 14:54 | Drink |
| FOALondon: stationary orders | | 15:25 | 3.00 p.m. Work |
| FOALondon: receiving journalists for interview, tea | | 15:38 | |
| FOALondon: drawing | | 15:54 | |
| FOALondon: reading architecture blogs | | 16:00 | |
| FOALondon: email correspondence: invitations, spam, product info, student inquiries, applications, cv's, newsletters, sales, press | | 16:31 | |
| FOALondon: adjusting the image in photoshop | | 16:35 | |
| FOALondon: oh yes revolving doors! | | 16:36 | |
| FOALondon: now some correspondence | | 16:36 | |
| FOALondon: ok done with finishes finally and back from lunch | | 16:36 | |
| FOALondon: intumescent paint count! | | 16:37 | |
| FOALondon: preparing for the discussion | | 16:37 | |
| FOALondon: waiting for the other rendering to be finished | | 16:38 | |
| FOALondon: beam take-off's | | 17:25 | |
| FOALondon: correspondence to AOR and engineer- lets get that work done! coordination time | | 17:26 | |
| FOALondon: coordinating movable walls with the structure | | 17:32 | 5.30 p.m. Supper |
| FOALondon: another e-mail to the engineer | | 17:32 | |
| FOALondon: up dating the drawing in panels | | 17:32 | |
| FOALondon: checking out birmingham from the top on google earth | | 17:33 | |
| FOALondon: off to the corner shop for sweets | | 17:37 | |
| FOALondon: redrawing prototype for manufacture in a 2 part cast | | 17:39 | |
| FOALondon: being relaxed after discussion for a sec | | 17:44 | |
| FOALondon: thinking about projects with interesting top light, let me know if you know any.. | | 18:01 | 6.00 p.m. Vespers |
| FOALondon: 3metres drawn, one to go | | 18:01 | |
| FOALondon: up dating the presentation | | 18:23 | |
| FOALondon: correspondence about travel arrangements for a conference | | 18:42 | |
| FOALondon: signing off and writing personal e-mails... | | 19:23 | |
| FOALondon: correspondence with intumescent paint sales people | | 19:23 | 7.30 p.m. Change into night shoes |
| FOALondon: prints for discussion on Monday morning and off.. | | 20:00 | Collatio |
| | | | 8.00 p.m. Compline |
| | | | c.8.15 p.m. Bed |