No matter how often I tell myself that chance happenings of this kind occur far more often than we suspect, since we all move, one after the other, along the same roads mapped out for us by our origins and our hopes, my rational mind is nonetheless unable to lay the ghosts of repetition that haunt me with ever greater frequency. Scarcely am I in company but it seems as if I had already heard the same opinions expressed by the same people somewhere or other, in the same way, with the same words, turns of phrase and gestures... Perhaps there is in this as yet unexplained phenomenon of apparent duplication some kind of anticipation of the end, a venture into the void, a sort of disengagement, which, like a gramophone repeatedly playing the same sequence of notes, has less to do with damage to the machine itself than with an irreparable defect in its programme.

W.G. SEBALD, THE RINGS OF SATURN

I would like to show that these unities form a number of autonomous, but not independent domains, governed by rules, but in perpetual transformation, anonymous and without a subject, but imbuing a great many individual works.

MICHEL FOUCAULT, THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE
FROM CRITICAL TO PROJECTIVE

In 1984, the editors of *Per Specta*, Carol Burns and Robert Taylor, set out an ambitious agenda for issue 21: "Architecture is not an isolated or autonomous medium, it is actively engaged by the social, intellectual, and visual culture which is outside the discipline and which encompasses it ... It is based on a premise that architecture is inevitably involved with questions more difficult than those of form or style." While this orientation bears a curious connection to the "realist" or "grey" tradition of an earlier Yale generation, it also serves as a sign of the nascent mixture of a critical, neo-Marxism with a celebration of the vernacular or everyday with which Yale would soon become synonymous.1

Published in that same issue, K. Michael Hays’s canonic essay "Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form" offered a useful corrective to the editorial position of the issue by indirectly implying that the editors were insufficiently dialectical in their understanding of engagement and autonomy. Hays’s sophistication has always been to recognize that autonomy is a precondition for engagement. Using Mies as a paradigm, Hays argued for the possibility of a "critical architecture" that would operate between the extremes of conciliatory commodity and negative commentary.

Twelve issues and seventeen years later, the editors of issue 33 have returned to the theme of interdisciplinarity. This time, however, the topic is explicitly underwritten by the terms established in Hays’s 1984 essay: "Per Specta 33 is built around the belief that architecture stands in the critical position between being a cultural product and a discrete autonomous discipline." Yet, while Hays was suggesting that only critical architecture operated in his privileged "between" position, the editors of 33 imply that all architecture now automatically occupies a de facto critical status. What for Hays was then an exceptional practice, has now been rendered an everyday fact of life. If nothing else, however, this inflation of critical practice by the editors of 33 has perhaps unconsciously identified a fact of the last twenty years: namely, that disciplinarity has been absorbed and exhausted by the project of criticality. As Hays’s first articulation of critical architecture was a necessary corrective to the realist position of Per Specta 21, it may be necessary (or, at least, useful) to provide an alternative to the now dominant paradigm of criticality, an alternative that will be characterized here as projective.

As evidenced by Hays’s insightful polemic, critical architecture, under the regime of textuality, required the condition of being "between" various discursive oppositions. Thus "culture and form" can alternatively be figured as "kitsch and avant-garde" (Clement Greenberg), "literary and phenomenal" (Colin Rowe), "objecthood and art" (Michael Fried), or "capitalist development and design" (Manfredo Tafuri). Within architecture, Rowe’s and Tafuri’s discourses most fully enable, if never completely realize, the critical project of "betweenness," whether within history/theory, as with Hays, or in terms of design, as with the work of Peter Eisenman.

It is from Rowe’s and Tafuri’s conceptual genetic material that architecture’s critical project has been formulated. For both authors, there is a requisite assumption of contradiction or ambiguity, regardless of whether it is subsumed or sublated (dialectical materialism) or balanced (liberal formalism). Even before examining the various reconfigurations of Rowe and Tafuri, however, it is important to recognize that the opposition between them is never as clear as would be imagined. Rowe’s ostensibly formal project has deep connections to a particular liberal politics, and Tafuri’s apparently engaged practice of dialectical critique entails a precise series of formal a prioris as well as a pessimistic prognosis with regard to architectural production. Seen in this way, there is no more political writer than Rowe, and none more formalist than Tafuri.

The criticality of Hays and Eisenman maintains the oppositional or dialectical framework in the work of their mentors and predecessors, while simultaneously trying to short-circuit or blur their terms. In their various attempts to hybridize Rowe and Tafuri in order to fashion a critical position, both Hays and Eisenman rely on dialectics—as is immediately evidenced in the titles of the journals each was responsible for founding: *Oppositions*
and Assemblage. Despite their implicit critiques of Michael Fried's aesthetics, both Eisenman and Hays ultimately fear literalism as much as Fried does; both warn against the isomorphic remapping of life and art. For both, disciplinarity is understood as autonomy (enabling critique, representation, and signification), but not as instrumentality (projection, performativity, and pragmatics). One could say that their definition of disciplinarity is directed against reification rather than toward the possibility of emergence. While reification concerns itself with the negation of qualitative experience to quantification, emergence promises that serial accumulation may itself result in the production of new qualities. As an alternative to the critical project – here linked to the indexical, the dialectical and hot representation – this text develops an alternative genealogy of the projective – linked to the diagrammatic, the atmospheric and cool performance.

FROM INDEX TO DIAGRAM
In the significant production of both Hays and Eisenman, as parallel realignments of Rowe and Tafuri, the critical project is inevitably mediated: in fact, it is perpetually obsessed by, and inexorably linked to, reproduction. This obsession manifests itself both in Hays's account of Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion and Peter Eisenman's rereading of Le Corbusier's Dom-ino, where both authors adopt the technique of the index. The index emerges as the most opportune mediator for the highly contextual and historically situated interpretive framework for Mies's architecture. It offers a form of deconstruction in itself: in each case, the structural core of the building remains intact, but its relationship with signification - in other words, it exists as a physically driven sign, one that is not culturally or visually determined, as are the symbol or iconic. For Hays, Mies's architecture situates itself "between the efficient representation of preexisting cultural values and the wholly detached autonomy of an abstract formal system." This status of being in the world yet resistant to it is attained by the way the architectural object materially reflects its specific temporal and spatial context, as well as the way it serves as a trace of its productive systems. Hays describes the Barcelona Pavilion as "an event with temporal duration, whose actual existence is continually being produced," or whose meaning is continually being decided. This act of decision is both in fact and etymologically the critical gesture par excellence.

In Eisenman's discussion of the Dom-ino, it is the design process itself that is being registered rather than the material productive and technical systems or specific context discussed by Hays. In marking the status of its existence, in its ability to function as a self-referential sign, the Dom-ino is one of the first modernist and critical gestures in architecture: "Architecture is both substance and act. The sign is a record of an intervention - an event and an act which goes beyond the presence of elements which are merely necessary conditions." For Eisenman and Hays, the Dom-ino and Barcelona Pavilion are at once traces of an event, indices of their procedures of design or construction, and objects that potentially point to a state of continual transformation. In both cases, the critical forms of self-referentiality are demonstrated via serial reproductions: be they Eisenman's redrawn axonometrics of the non-existent Dom-ino perspective, or the historical photographs Hays uses to extract the experience of the defunct, original Barcelona Pavilion. Just as the architectural artifacts are indices of a missing process or practice, the objects themselves are also significantly missing in both cases, so that a series of reproductions must stand in as their traces. This process of infinite regress or deferral is constitutive of the critical architectural project: architecture inevitably and centrally preoccupied by its status as representation, and its simultaneous commentary on that condition.

As an alternative to Eisenman's reflections on the high European frame, which situated the frame within the context of the critical-indexical project of the 1970s, one might look to Rem Koolhaas's appropriation of the mass cultural American frame at the same moment. As suggested above, Eisenman understands Le Corbusier's Dom-ino as the trace of a transformative process, and in so doing he deviates from Rowe by animating the grid. Just as the indexical project assumes or invents a particular kind of reading subject for architecture, its imagination of architectural movement relies on a narrative for the grid. Thus, although the indexical program for architecture may proceed through diagrams, it is still tied to a semiotic, representational and sequential ambi-
tion. Koolhaas’s invocation of the “cartoon-theorem” from Life magazine—as well as the section cut from the Downtown Athletic Club—alternatively enlists a vision of architecture as contributing to the production and projection of new forms of collectivity. These New York frames exist as instruments of metropolitan plasticity and are not primarily architecture for paying attention to; they are not for reading, but for seducing, becoming, instigating new events and behaviors. The skyscraper-machine allows the projection infinitely upward of virtual worlds within this world, and in this way extends Michel Foucault’s reflections on heterotopias and prisons. Gilles Deleuze argues that Foucault understands Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon not simply as a machine for surveillance, but more broadly and productively as a diagram which “imposes a particular form of conduct on a particular multiplicity.” Koolhaas’s investigation of the frame structure is diagrammatic in the same way.

From these two inventions of the frame structure in mid-20th architectural discourse, one can discern two orientations toward disciplinarity: that is, disciplinarity as autonomy and process, as in the case of Eisenman’s reading of the Donjono, and disciplinarity as force and effect, as in Koolhaas’s staging of the Downtown Athletic Club. Moreover, these two examples begin to differentiate the critical project in architecture, with its connection to the indexical, from the projective, which proceeds through the diagram. The diagram is a tool of the virtual to the same degree that the index is the tool of the real.

FROM DIALECTICS TO DOPPLER

Rather than relying upon the oppositional strategy of critical dialectics, the projective employs something similar to the Doppler Effect—the perceived change in the frequency of a wave that occurs when the source and receiver of the wave have a relative velocity. The Doppler Effect explains the change in pitch between the sound of a train as it approaches and then moves away from the listener.1 If critical dialectics established architecture’s autonomy as a means of defining architecture’s field or discipline, a Doppler architecture acknowledges the adaptive synthesis of architecture’s many contingencies. Rather than isolating a singular autonomy, the Doppler focuses upon the effects and exchanges of architecture’s inherent multiplicities: material, program, writing, atmosphere, form, technologies, economics, etc. It is important to underscore that this multiplying of contingencies differs greatly from the more dilute notion of interdisciplinarity, which seeks to legitimize architecture through an external measuring stick, thereby reducing architecture to the entirely amorphous role of absorber of heterogeneous life. A projective architecture does not shy away from reinstating architectural definition, but that definition stems from design and its effects rather than a language of means and materials. The Doppler shifts the understanding of disciplinarity as autonomy to disciplinarity as performance or practice. In the former, knowledge and form are based on shared norms, principles, and traditions. In the latter, a more Foucaultian notion of disciplinarity is advanced in which the discipline is not a fixed datum or entity, but rather an active organism or discursive practice, unplanned and ungovernable, like Foucault’s “unities forming a number of autonomous, but not independent domains, governed by rules, but in perpetual transformation.” Rather than looking back or criticizing the status quo, the Doppler projects forward alternative (not necessarily oppositional) arrangements or scenarios.

A projective architecture does not make a claim for expertise outside the field of architecture nor does it limit its field of expertise. An absolute definition of architecture Design is what keeps architecture from slipping into a cloud of heterogeneity. It delineates the fluctuating borders of architecture’s disciplinarity and expertise. So when architects engage topics that are seemingly outside of architecture—historically-defined scope—questions of economics or civic politics, for example—they don’t engage those topics as experts on economics or civic politics, for example (the knower, the expert), as experts on design and how design may affect economics or politics. They engage these other discourses as expansion of design’s relationship to these other disciplines, rather than as critics. Design encompasses object qualities (form, proportion, materiality, composition, etc.) but it also includes qualities of sensibility, such as effect, ambience, and atmosphere.

An example of a projective architecture that engages the strategy of the Doppler effect in lieu of that of the dialectic is WW’s IntraCenter, a 40,000 ft² community center located in Lexington, Kentucky. The IntraCenter’s client provided WW with a program list of dizzying operational heterogeneity: daycare, athletic facilities, social services, café, library, computer center, job training facilities, shops, etc. Rather than figuring these multiple programs so as to provide each with its own formal identification, or rather than establishing a neutral field so as to allow the programs to define the project, the IntraCenter elides the expected
overlap between form and program. Their lack of alignment leads to a perpetual Doppler shift between the two. This strategy of non-concentricity generates other Doppler Effects, including the many reverberations among overlapping constituencies as well as material and structural conditions. The IntraCenter is projective rather than critical in that it very deliberately sets into motion the possibility of multiple engagements rather than a single articulation of program, technology or form (contemporary architecture’s commodity, firmness and delight).

The Doppler Effect shares some attributes with parallax, which, as Yve-Alain Bois notes, comes from the Greek parallaxis, or “change”: “the apparent change in the position of an object resulting from the change in the...position from which it is viewed.”11 Claiming that Serra consciously responded to the possibilities of parallax, Bois cites as an example Serra’s description of his sculpture entitled Sight Point: “It seems at first to fall right to left, make an x, and straighten itself out to a truncated pyramid. That would occur three times as you walked around.”12 In other words, parallax is the theatrical effect of a peripatetic view of an object. It takes into account how the context of the place is what defines a given building and how “we only complete the work of art.”

Where the Doppler differs from parallax is in that it is not purely optical. Predicated on waves that can be auditory or visual, the Doppler suggests that the optical and conceptual are only two of many sensibilities. Additionally, it is not a reading strategy — that is, it is not just an unfolding reading of an artwork — but an atmospheric interaction. It foregrounds the belief that both the subject and the object carry and exchange information and energy. In short, a user might be more attuned to certain aspects of a building than others. He or she might understand how the building responds to a formal history of architecture or deploys a specific technology or he or she might have particular associations with a building’s material palette or site. As the novelist W.G. Sebald explains, each one of us experiences moments of repetition, coincidence or duplication, where echoes of other experiences, conversations, moods and encounters affect current ones. Such momentary echoes are like tracks out of alignment, hearing and seeing out of phase that generate momentary déjà vus, an overlap of real and virtual worlds.

FROM HOT TO COOL
Someone should establish an anthropology of hot and cool...

Jean Baudrillard

Overall, one might characterize the shift from critical to projective modes of disciplinarity as a process of cooling down or, in Marshall McLuhan’s terms, of moving from a “hot” to a “cool” version of the discipline. Critical architecture is hot in the sense that it is preoccupied with separating itself from normative, background or anonymous conditions of production, and with articulating difference. For McLuhan, hot media like film are “high-definition”, conveying very precise information on one channel or in one mode. By contrast, cool media, such as television, are low-definition and, since the information they convey is compromised, they require the participation of the user. In this regard, the formalist-critical project is hot in its prioritization of definition, delineation and distinction (or medium specificity). One alternative, minimalism, would be a cool art form; it is low-definition and requires the context and viewer to complete it, lacking both self-sufficiency and self-consciousness. Minimalism explicitly requires participation and is related to Smithson’s promotion of entropy. While cooling suggests a process of mixing (and thus the Doppler Effect would be one form of cool), the hot resists through distinction, and connotes the overly difficult, belabored, worked, complicated. Cool is relaxed, easy. This difference between the cool and the hot may be amplified by briefly examining a medium McLuhan does not discuss: performance.

In his obituary on the actor, Dave Hickey writes that with Robert Mitchum you get performance,2 and performance, he says, not expressed (or represented), but delivered. The Mitchum effect relies on knowing something is back there, but not being sure exactly what it is. Hickey says that what Mitchum does, then, is always surprising and plausible. And it’s exactly this trait of surprising plausibility that might be adapted as a projective effect, one which combines the chance event with an expanded realism. There are two kinds of actors, Hickey argues. First are some who construct a character out of details and make you believe their character by constructing a narrative for them. One could say that this is the school of the “Method,” where the actor provides gesture and motivation, and supplies a subtext for the text of the script. The second group of actors create plausibility by their bodies; Hickey says they are not really acting, but rather “performing with a vengeance.” While Robert De Niro is an actor in the first category, Mitchum is in the second.

In the nineteen-eighties and nineties, architecture’s relationship to philosophy was like that of De Niro to his character. In other words, a kind of Method acting, or Method designing, where the architect expressed a text or where architecture represented its process of formation. As with the “critical project,” Method acting was connected to psychoanalysis, to calling up and re-acting memories and past events. In contrast, Mitchum, Hickey says, is.

Like Coltrane, playing a standard, he is投注ing the text with his own subversive vision, his own pace and sense of dark contingency. So what we see in a Mitchum performance is less the character portrayed than a propositional alternative: What if someone with Mitchum’s sensibility grew up to be a sea captain? a private eye? a school-teacher?”13
In De Niro's acting, one witnesses the struggle, not just within the character, but between the actor and the character, such that the trace of the construction of the character is visible. There is no other way to say this except that, when watching De Niro, it looks like work (think of the signature mugger and concentrated gestures). The opening scenes in both versions of Cape Fear are instructive in this regard. The 1962 remake begins with De Niro working out in prison, engaging or rehearsing, where the sweat rolling off his back is visible. In the original, Mitchum is in the rush-rakish, lascivious, enjoying a cigar and checking out two women as they leave the courthouse, cool as the breeze. He makes it look easy. So "De Niro architecture" is hot, difficult, and indexes the processes of its production: it's clearly labor, narrative, or representational, or expresses a relationship of the representation to the real (the provision of a psychic subtext from a real event for a fictional text). Mitchum plays a cameo role as a detective in the remake, and as he is watching De Niro/Cady strip-searched, he sees his body covered with biblical proverbs and comments with a degree of reproach (as much for the Method-acting De Niro as the character Cady?): "I don't know whether to look at him or to read him." In contrast to this narrative mode, "Mitchum architecture" is cool, easy, and never looks like work; it's about mood or the inhabitation of alternative realities (what if?, the virtual). Here, mood is the open-ended corollary of the cool-producing effect without high definition, providing room for maneuver, and promoting complexity with subjects. With Mitchum, there are scenarios, not psychodramas. The unease and anxiety of the unhomely has been replaced with the propositional alternative of the intimate.

Within architecture, a project of delivering performance, or soliciting a surprising plausibility, suggests moving away from a critical architectural practice – one which is reflective, representational, and narrative – to a projective practice. Setting out this projective program does not necessarily entail a capitalization to market forces, but actually respects or reorganizes multiple economies, ecologies, information systems, and social groups.

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NOTES
1 See the collection of essays, Architecture of the Everyday, edited by Deborah Berke and Steven Harris (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997).
2 Formulating their own critical positions, both Hay and Eisenman missed Rowe and Tatlin, according to Harold Bloom's understanding of misreading as poetic influence: "Lyrical incursion – when it involves two strong, authentic poets – proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misappropriation." Harold Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry (NY: Oxford University Press, 1973), 10.
3 Significantly, the "outsider" for Fried was a theatrical anathema that undermined modernist specificity.
4 Mediated here refers both to Fredric Jameson's theorization of mediation as an active between – that is, as an engaged interaction between two subjects or between a subject and an object, rather than a passive between that operates as pureconciliation between two terms and to Marshall McLuhan's understanding of mediation as mass media's translatable reproductibility.
6 Hay, ibid. 15.
7 For more on this distinction, see Defeau and Guattari. "Disregards must be distinguished from index, which are territorial signs, but also from norms, which permit to deterritorialization, and from symbols, which permit to relative or negative deterritorialization. Defined diagrammatically in this way, an abstract machine is neither an infrastructure that is deterritorializing in the last instance, nor a transcendental idea that is determining in the supraplanar instance. Rather, it is a praxial idea. The diagrammatic or abstract machine does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality." A Thousand Plateaus (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 142.
8 The Doppler Effect was discovered by the Austrian mathematician and physicist, Christian Doppler (1803-1853).
9 Michel Foucault, Archaeology of Knowledge.
11 Ibid.: 66.
13 Ibid.: 12.