Exploring Intertextuality

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A special project report

By

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Guided by Prof. Poovaiah

APPROVAL

This is to certify that **'exploring intertextuality'** , a special project has been submitted by
Sachin Behere (97613006) ,
as a part of academic projects, in the partial fulfilment of M.Des. (product design) at IDC, IIT Bombay.

Date : Feb 11, 1999

Guided by : Prof. Ravi Poovaiah

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This work would not have come to reality without

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Prof. Robert from Falmouth School Of design, U.K. , who had his share in the 'interactive sculpture', an event in the inter-institutional Virtual Holi project held at IDC (march1998 which was organised by Prof. Ravi Poovaiah and Mrs.Ajanta Poovaiah.

Neeti Gupta, who worked on the design part with me and was the co-producer of the design entry sent to 9th Osaka International Design Competition (Jan 1999)

I am grateful to their support and encouragement.

Sachin Behere.

- Approval 1
- Acknowledgement 2

CONTENTS

1 Introduction 4

The theme, purpose and scope of work.

2 Situation studies 5

1. two things coming together
2. disciplines : an overview
3. combinations
4. other experiences
5. analysis
6. conclusive theme

3 Installation : a design approach 16

1. installation
2. proposed situation
3. two disciplines : elements and media
4. Cornish sailboat : a story
5. World of fishermen

4 Concept (dwaita : the dual) 20

1. elements and potential
2. division of space
3. colour symbolism
4. drawings and model

INTRODUCTION

Intertextuality is a theme of the 9th OSAKA international design competition for design. This project works upon the theme and contains two parts. The first is the study of situations that have demonstrated intertextuality. Second part is a design approach that exemplifies the theme.

The theme : design is always studied in terms of its roots, context and its perceptional value. Design activity generates out of a certain background and the background creates the form giving forces . if we look back into what makes a design, we ca find a wonderful range of experiences and expertise satisfying sensory and material needs. It is interesting to know WHAT makes a design retain its context still leave the viewer freedom of choice.

There could be one thing or there could be many. The idea here is to study the combination of roots of design. The purpose of this study is to find out all sorts of related /unrelated things that get associated with the design activity. The focus will be on understanding how two things come together and form a base for design.

Intertextuality , is to relate diverse things with one another and blend them into a design situation or potential.

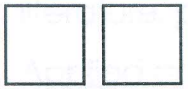
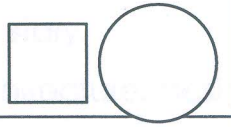
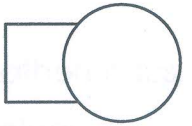
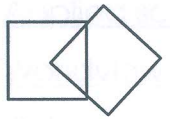
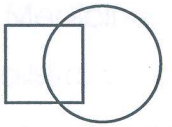
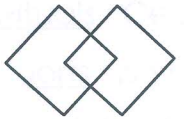
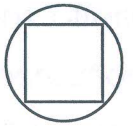
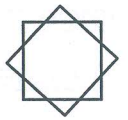
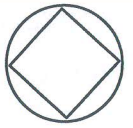
The scope of work. : intermixing can be attained on all levels. Cultures , generations, sensitivities, and ways of thinking. The union can occur between media, materials, disciplines, thought processes or viewpoints. This project focuses on two or more disciplines and therefore attitudes that come together and create an event which is an interesting design situation.

2.1 two things coming together :

two things come together with a purpose. They come together in space, time or in spirit. The ultimate result may or may not reveal the individual identities of its root components.

1. coexist separable
   e.g. oil drops in the water.
2. photography : use of photo-chemistry for artistic expression .
3. a ballet : dance and music, a complementary union.
4. Unity with a new identity.
5. This i s when one thing transforms into another in time.

2. SITUATION STUDIES:

Two similar things	Two different things	Event
		
		X + Y Coexist, separable
		X – Y Share a cause
		XY Complimentary union
		X / Y Unite with a new identity
		X → Y Transformation in time.

2.2 disciplines : an overview

firstly let us look at disciplines as the subjects people live with and therefore a viewpoint they carry with each of them . Disciplines here are natural events and human mindset.

Human Culture

1. ARTS :
   - Fine arts
   - Applied arts

1. SCIENCE
   - Pure sciences
   - Applied sciences

2. PHILOSOPHY
   - Religion
   - Worldview
   - Rituals

3. RECREATION
   - Sports
   - Festivals

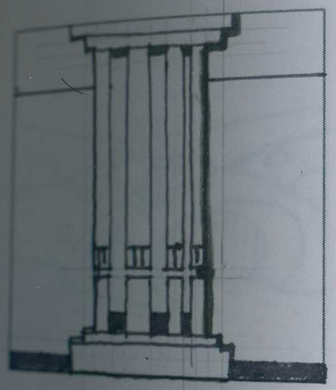
4. SOCIETY :
   - Administration
   - Entrepreunership
   - Services

Further division

1) fine arts : music, painting , sculpture, dance, literature, poetry, story.
2) Applied arts : architecture, design, theatre, film, multimedia, etc.
3) Pure sciences : mathematics, physics, chemistry, bio-sciences, astrology
4) Applied sciences: Medicine, technology.
5) Worldview : Materialistic, spiritual
6) Philosophy : introvert, outward.
7) Rituals : Celebrations, offerings, prayers.
8) Sports : physical , recreational.
9) Administration : politics , management
10) Entrepreunership : business, media .
11) Services. Technical , social

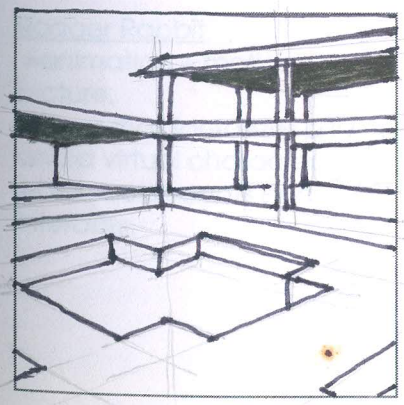
2.3 COMBINATIONS

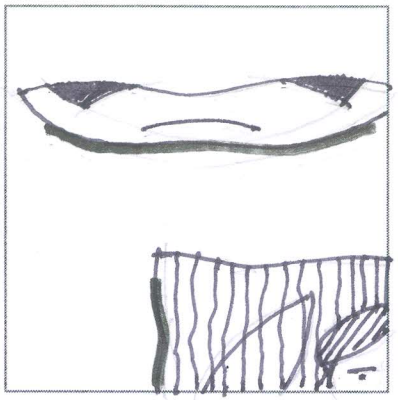
Let's look at some events and design happenings which have directly or indirectly intermixed various disciplines.



The temple in Suchindram, Kerala with musical resonating columns as a part of offering to God. A combination of music, laws of physics and craft of stone carving.

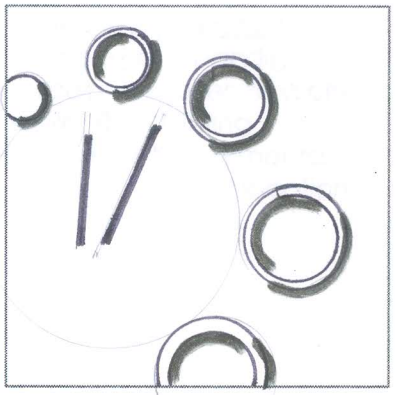
Tansen's court in fatehpur sikree complex. The air-column behind the performance square acts as sound amplifier for the audience sitting





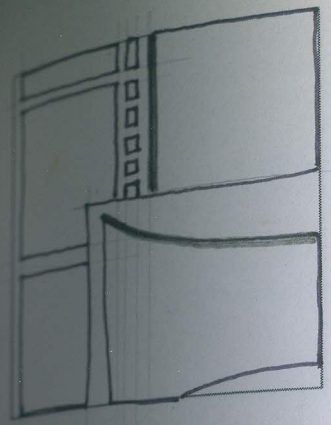
A musical pillow : a product designed for a n elevated experience while one sleeps. an earphone system integrated with the foam pillow, with special controls make sleeping an experience altogether with

Jal-Tarang : A simple daily phenomenon converted into a musical instrument. The bowl size and the liquid level dictates a particular frequency of sound, which on adjustment can

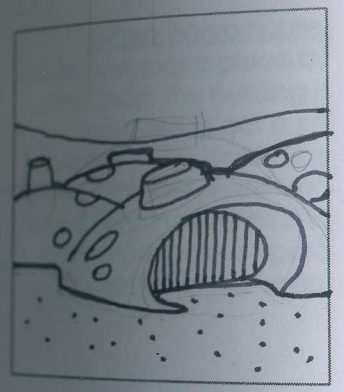


Fashion shows.

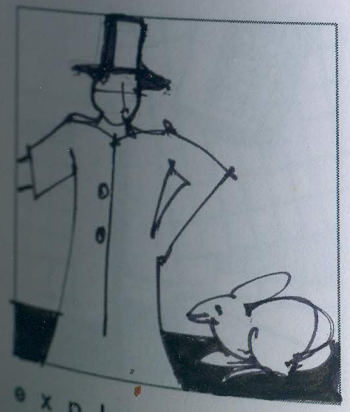
The theme of fashion show is based on the physical rhythm of music and human form with the world of textile aesthetics.



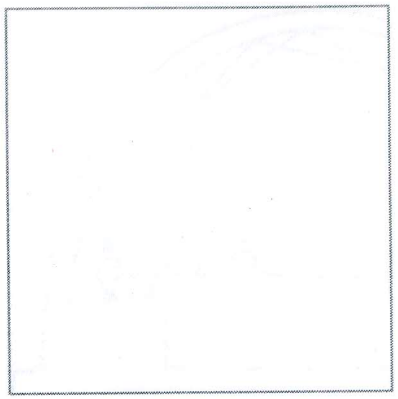
Films : a true multidisciplinary event. Theatre, acting, technology, music, dance, illusion, story, literature and architecture, all woven



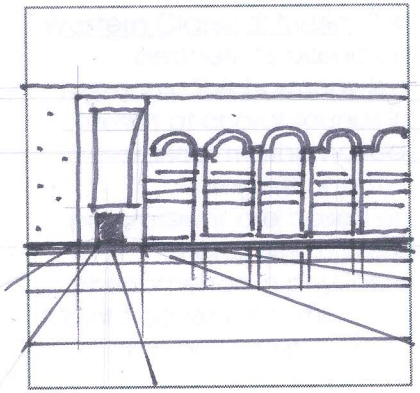
Hussain Doshi gufa:
A combined effort of an architect and a renown painter. An art gallery in form of underground space covered with shells and skylights.



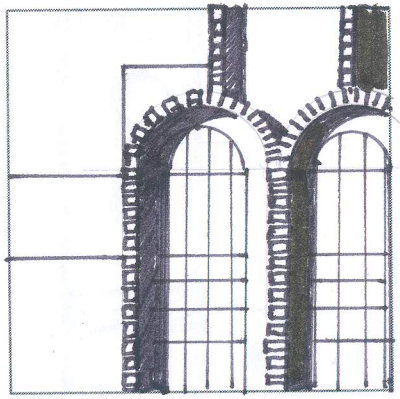
Rogger Rabbit
=animation + motion picture.
A story that fantasizes a living and a virtual character which acts, reacts and interacts.



Jurassic Park : a film with humans in combination with computer modeled realistic dinosaurs

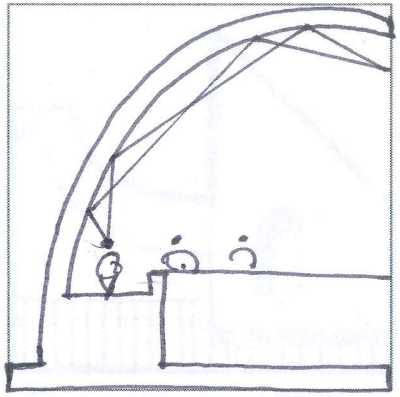


Le -Corbusier's Capitol Complex at Chandigarh.:
A sculpture taken to a city scale. The building represents the democratic values in terms of location, form and symbols.



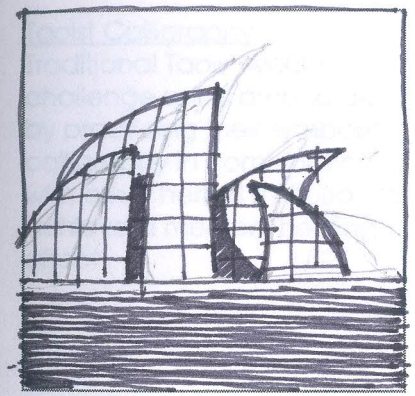
Belgian Embassy: :
Satish Gujral's sculptural architecture. The design has explored the traditional material, bricks into a cross cultural expression.

Michalangelo :
This is a different example. Here, one person is made up of so many disciplines which affect each other. He was a painter, a sculptor, an architect, product designer, and astrologer.

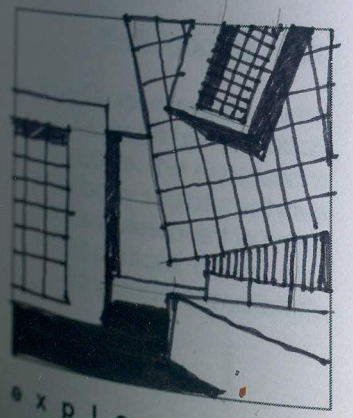


The Gol-Gumbaj of Bijapur : This mega size dome is so perfect in it's inner curvature that minutest of sound gets transferred from across the diagonal with a acoustic clarity and seven rhythmic echoes. A true demonstration of building craft attaining perfection in science .

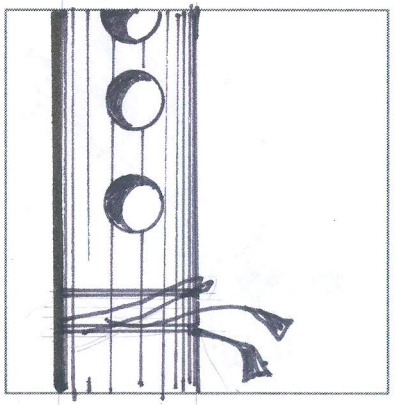
Sydney opera house: Architectural masterpiece by John Utzon. The building is supposed to act a s a sculpture on an island. The spatial composition derived from shells, functions as one of the most famous opera houses in the world.



Western Classical Music. The aesthetic is based on harmony. The harmony is a result of choral sounds in various mathematical progressions. The progressions are based on chords which are a phenomenon in physics, a trio of frequencies which are in a harmonious order.

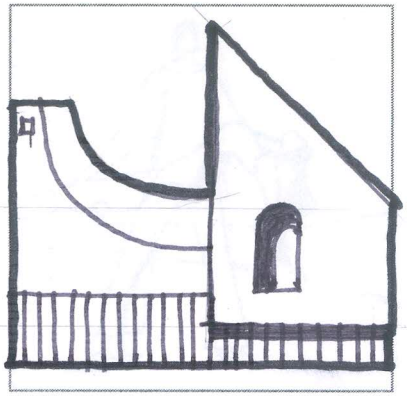


Deconstruction Movement: A short time school of thought which emerged out in English literature and got transferred to architecture. Indeed a viewpoint that worked at periphery but influenced many other designers. Something that looks at positive and negative with equal control.

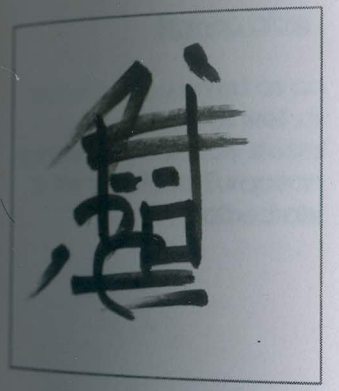


Flute :
A traditional musical instrument almost all over the world. A simple resonating air column with a variety of changeable notes.

Mantras in Hindu philosophy:
The vedic sciences of sound and philosophy developed these specific sounds which had high energy controlling frequency combinations and at the same time, worked as religious expressions, as in the prayers/ good wishes.

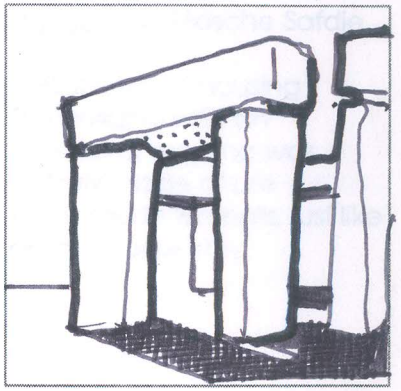


Jantar Mantar at Delhi:
This was a Hindu monument made in Rajput Dynasty. The purpose was very different, as an instrument to understand universe by its capacity to create shadows and various viewing frames for sky watching. Truly an astrophysical instrument in architectural format.



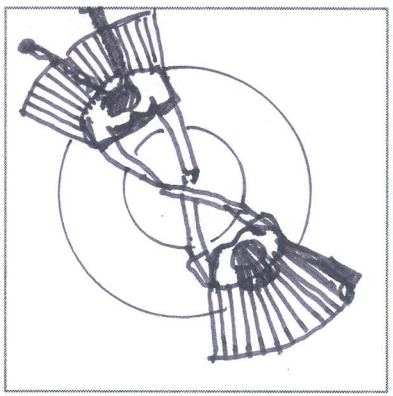
Taoist Calligraphy.
Traditional Taoist would challenge spirits around us, by practicing their symbolic calligraphy in combination with other herbal materials to achieve a medical healing effect.

Stone Henge :again a monument that represents a culture of ancient civilization and their achievement in the field of astronomy. Stonehenge was an instrument to see stars and locate them. Today it works as a monumental sculpture.



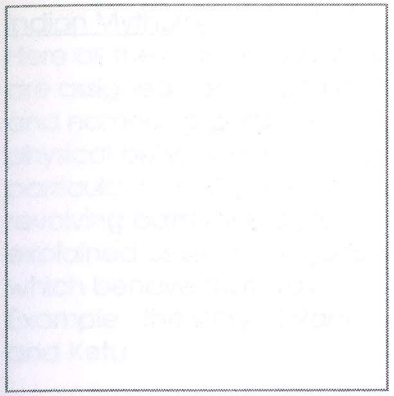
Piraji Sagara's work.

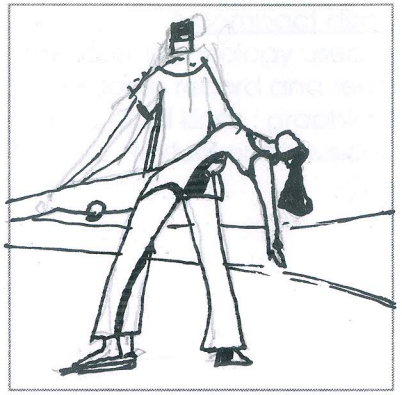
A well known sculptor who works on human body language. The expressions on his body sculptures have a different viewpoint in terms of proportions, curves and language of materials.



Phugadi : a sport in traditional India . two people hold their hands and revolve around with a speed. One can see a combination of principle of centrifugal force and the rhythm followed with stepping around. A fun game and an exciting experience.

Music therapy : the use of music as a treatment. Originated in mantras and been modified into abstract music which has healing and comforting qualities at subtle level.



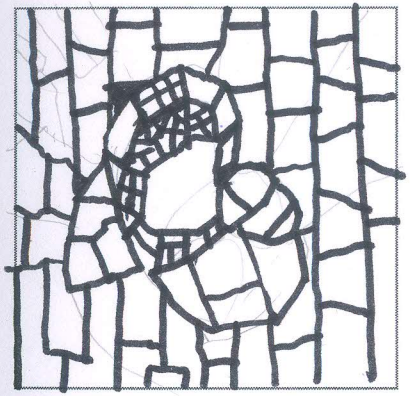


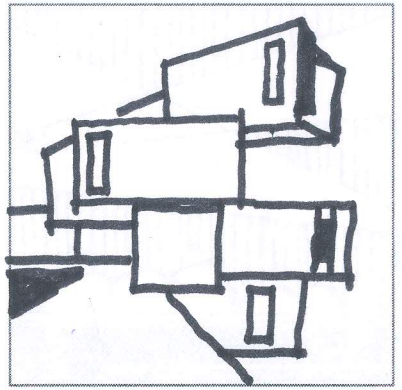
Ice skating:

A perfect combination of sports , dance and music a different kind of artform .

Stained glass :

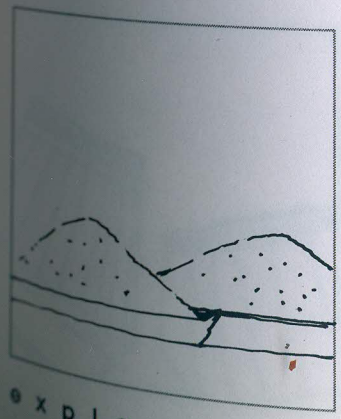
Stained glass worked as an artform as well as representation of holy stories in the traditional European cathedrals.





Habitat , by Mosche Safdie

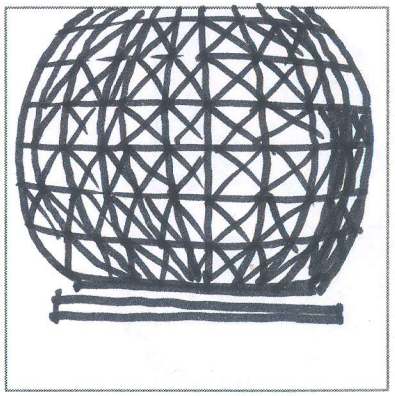
Prefabricated housing : This building with an interesting massing was entirely made of pre fabricated elements, just like product assembly.



Holi : a festival in India that deals with colors as theme. It's a celebration of nature and a tribute to the beauty of nature. The festival represents activation to all five senses.

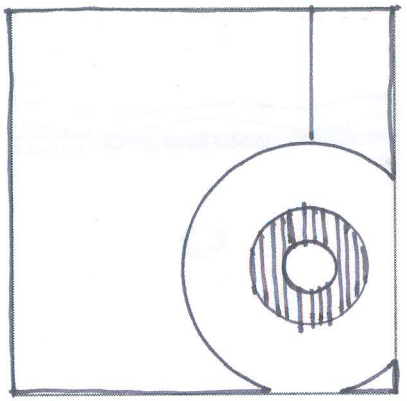
Matri mandir at Auroville.

This is a spiritual space, a space of worship and meditation. The architecture symbolizes the vision of universe by Sri aurobindo and The Mother.

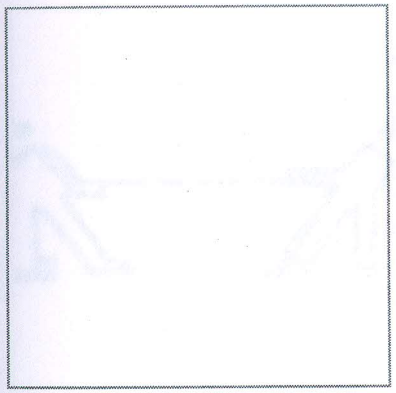


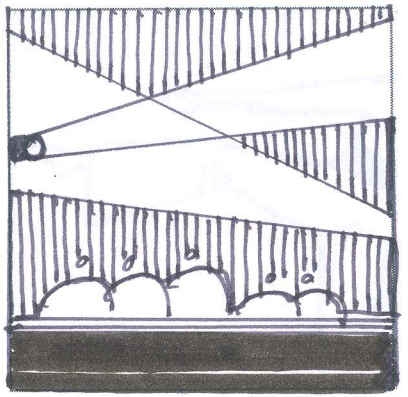
Indian Mythology
Here all the planets and stars are assigned various groups and named as gods. The physical behavior of particular planet (their revolving pattern, etc.) is explained as stories of gods which behave that way. Example, the story of Rahu and Ketu .

A compact disc :
The laser technology used in order to record and read data of all kinds : graphical textual and musical.



Photography:
This is an art of creating illusion of a reality and portraying an image through a medium of chemicals and aided by camera which works on the principles of physics





Laser shows :

Technology when reaches to common uses, creates interesting situations. Laser because of its non-deviating nature, can produce special lighting effects at fashionable spatial shows .

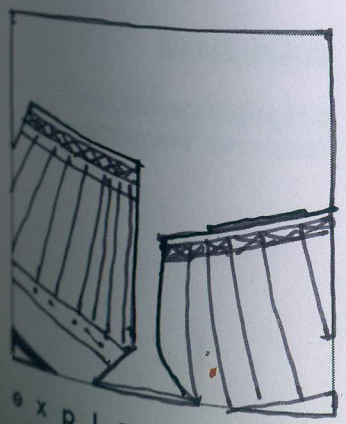
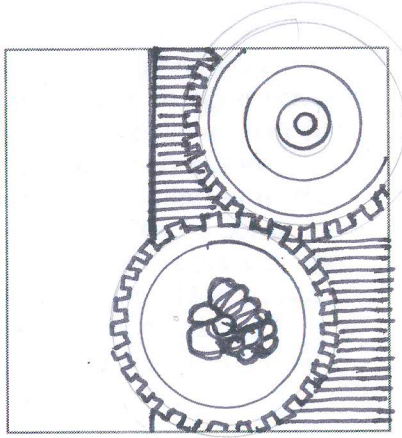


Tabla :the percussion instrument played in India. The aesthetic is based on mathematical patterns .

Sugarcane juice machine.

This is a slightly different experience in rural India where the machine for making sugarcane juice is tied with small 'ghungroos' so that the noisy rotation of the gears also produce amusing sounds for the worker's delight.

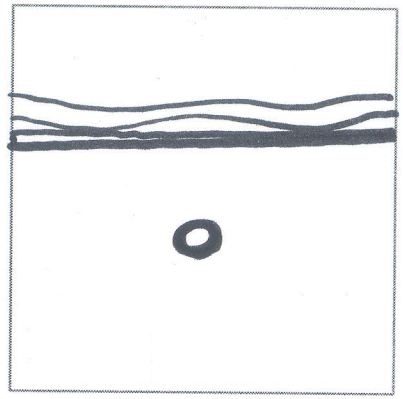


Artificial heart :

The outcome of bio mechanics : a replacement of human heart with a bio mechanical heart. This is one area which has combined two entirely different kinds of science and technology.
Another example. test tube baby

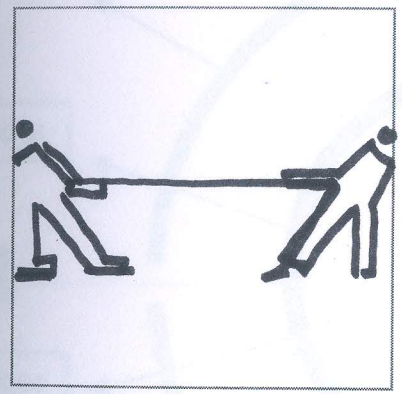
Nuclear bomb :

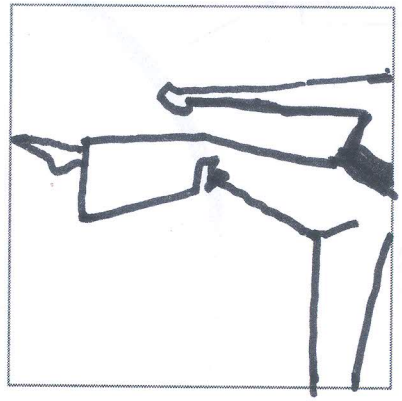
A high technology which is primarily used for threat and as a symbol of power. A conflicting union of constructive technology and destructive philosophy.



Tug of war :

Sport with simple physics.



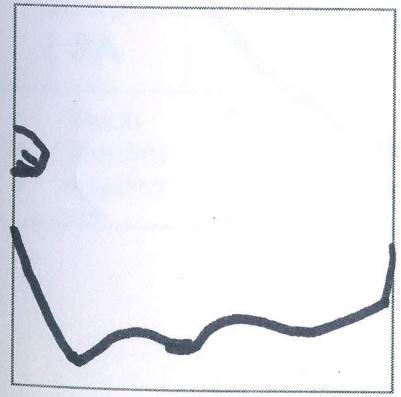


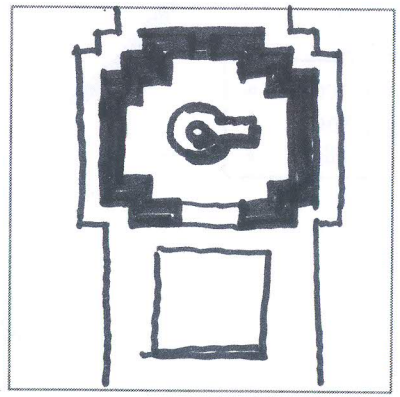
Martial arts :

A sport in a form of self defense through inner and external strength achieved through hard practice and meditation. The sport is visually and physically accepted as an artform.

Body building:

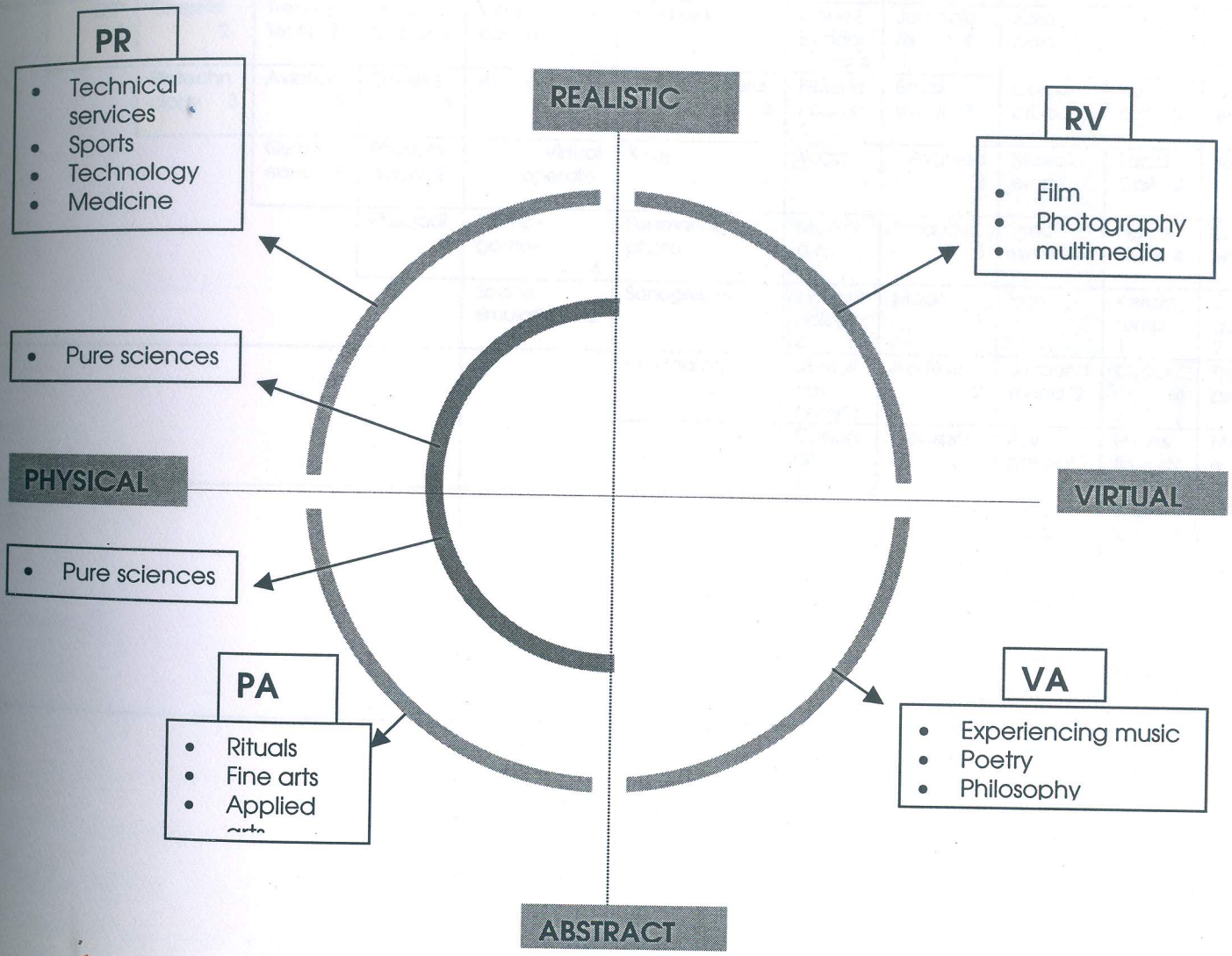
An artificial biological development for a sport.





Temple garbh griha :
The Indian temples have this concept of innermost core space which is dark and has a high sanctity level.. the darkness results out of structural reasons but also generates a hierarchy of experiences as one approaches from outer world.

The classification of various disciplines .



2.4 ANALYSIS: Intertextual situations in combinations of different categories of disciplines and types of combining

		PR					RV		VA			PA			
		Tech Serv	Techno logy	Medicine	Sports	Pure science	Multi media	Photo graphy	Philoso phy	Literature /poetry	Music exp.	Fine arts	Applied arts	Archit / design	ritual
PR	Tech. Services.		DTP 3	Chemist 2	Trekking Tents 2	Horo Scope 2	Video-confer. 3	Polaroid 1	Conc.technology 4	Journalism 4	Juke box 3	Signboard 2	Screenprinting 1	Prefab Hsg. 2	Priest 3
	Technology			Biotechnology 3	Aviation 2	Satellite 3	Animations 2	Digital camera 3	Nuclear bomb 3	Email-literat. 3	CompactDisc 1	Keyboard 3	InterfaceDes 2	Fuller's dome3	Yadnya 1
	Medicine				Gym – equip. 4	Physiotherapy 2	Virtual operate. 3	X ray 2	Yoga 4	Ayurved 3	MusicTherapy. 2	Taoist Calli 2	Aerobics 4	Herb.landsc. 1	Childbirth 1
	Sports / games					Phugadi 4	Comp-games 4	Submarine photo 1	Martial arts. 2	Scrabble 3	Sync-swim. 3	Figure Skate 4	Lasershows 4	Lego 2	Bhondla 3
	Pure. Science.						Space simulation 2	Sonography 4	Ind.mythology 4	Moon 1	Flute 2	Kerala temp 1	Gol gumbaj 2	Fateh-sikree2	Mantras 3
RV	Multi-media							Film making 3	Ubiquitous comp3	Ad-films 2	Surround sound 2	Circus 4	Theatre-prods.3	Red fort L & s.2	Virtual Holi 4
	Photography								Curlian photo. 1	Newspapers 3	A/v present3	Ph. As fineart1	Montage 2	Installation 4	Image worship 1
VA	Philosophy									Vedas 2	Osho music 1	Impression'm 4	MTV 2	Matrimandir 4	Upanayan 2
	Poetry / Literature										Film music 1	A play 4	Typography 2	Decon. movt. 4	Holy Songs3
	Music exp.											Ballet 3	Choreo Graphy2	Greekt heatre 2	Shahna irecital 1
PA	Fine arts												Fashion show 1	Hussain-doshi2	Taoist Callig.3
	App. arts.													Exhibition 2	Rangoli 1
	architecture														Garbha Griha 1
	rituals														

Classification of combinations and identification of dominant combining typology.

	1	2	3	4	Dominant	
PR + PR	0	5	3	2	2	1 &2
RV + RV	0	0	1	0	1	
VA + VA	2	1	0	0	1	
PA +PA	3	2	1	0	1	
PR +RV	2	3	4	2	3	2 &3
PR +PA	5	7	5	3	2	
PR+ VA	2	3	6	4	3	
RV+ VA	1	2	3	0	3	
RV + PA	2	2	1	3	4	3& 4
PR + VA	2	3	6	4	3	

All examples of the situations are the combinations of two or more disciplines. The situations can be classified in terms of their generating principles.

Broadly the principles are realistic , physical, virtualand abstract. All situations possess characteristics of two of these, only the inclination differs.

Observations:

- the situations generated out of similar disciplines
  (when two disciplines of same typology come together), are primarily type 1 and 2 i.e. they either coexist with independence or they share their qualities partly for a cause.
- the situations which arise out of combination of adjacent typologies have type 2 or type 3 either sharing values or complementary unions.
- The situations which arise from completely opposite types have character of types 3 and 4 i.e. they form complementary unions (non separable) or form a totally new concept.

2.6 conclusive note

the fact that the above situations are combinations of realistic and abstract, they become 'representative' of both. In one sense they act symbolic and on the other hand they are mere physical entities.

A design situation is one where conflict is present. The conflict can be inherent, or induced. The conflict arises out of difference in origin, attitude and direction. The design is where two related or unrelated phenomena share only their constructive components leaving the differences aside.

The theme of the project, INTERTEXTUALITY, precisely means the same.
The design happens when a message / intended function/ experience/ comfort/ convenience/ is given a physical form. The design is what surprises the user/viewer by its ability to show the intelligent midway between the conflicts.
The challenge lies in understanding the principles of this union between diversities.

1. A DESIGN APPROACH :

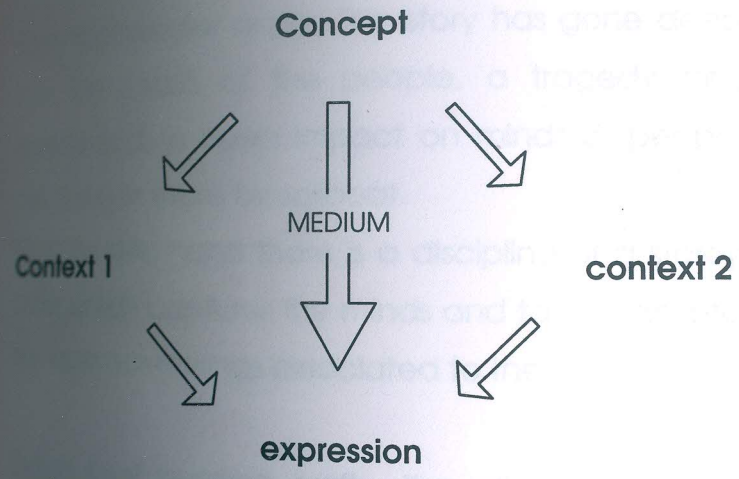
1.1 INTERACTION

The interaction can happen at all three vertices of the design triangle viz. Concept (intention), medium (realistic elements ---disciplines as well as media) and the user (viewer's perception)
Here we look at a multidisciplinary approach to a multi-contextual situation. The viewer part is kept constant so that one can explore the conceptual dimension of the problem.

The experiment goes like this. We consider an object A placed in two different contexts. Consequently, the viewpoints to look at that object are different. These different viewpoints, if expressed through a medium that again has a

character of multiple levels of expressions, would create an intertextual experience.

INSTALLATION is one medium which crosses the boundaries, has a power of expression beyond three dimensions.



1.2 PROPOSED SITUATION

There is a boat in this story. The boat is an object around which all situation revolve, hence it becomes the spine of entire design expression. This boat exists at physical, realistic, functional, visual and sensory level. It also remains in one's thoughts, principles and feelings.

Cornish Sail-Boat: A boat belongs to a story that has a place in Cornish culture, a part of British heritage. the story is that there was this king who loved a girl but things so happened that they separated and he married someone else. The girl went to someother place. and when she was dying he wanted to see the king so she sent the king the message that he should come to see her and that was her dying wish.She said to the king that if his sail had a white sail it would mean that he still loves her and is in the boat but if the boat has a black sail that means that he does not love her. the king still loved her and immediately set out

to sail to see his beloved but the king's wife grew jealous and changed the sail colour to black. the dying girl saw that from the window and died thinking that the king never loved her.when the king reached the shore .....his beloved was dead .

The traditional cornish story looks at this sail boat from a particular angle. The story has gone deep into the hearts of the people, a tragedy that reveals such a deep impact on minds of people has a major share by sailboat.

Thus, on one hand there is a discipline of a storey teller which captures the minds and takes one into the abstract feelings associated to the story.

Indian Boat building craft: the other side is the most visual, physical aspect of boat, that is the boat building craft, majorly practised by fishermen. A fisherman's entire life revolves around this sail boat. He makes it, maintains it, spends nights and hours on the boat. Each part of boat is very much physical, real to his life. The wooden planks, the mast, nets, the tyres, the fish and the sea and the sky that surround him.

Indian fishermen have a typical lifestyle. The scenario is made out of many factors :

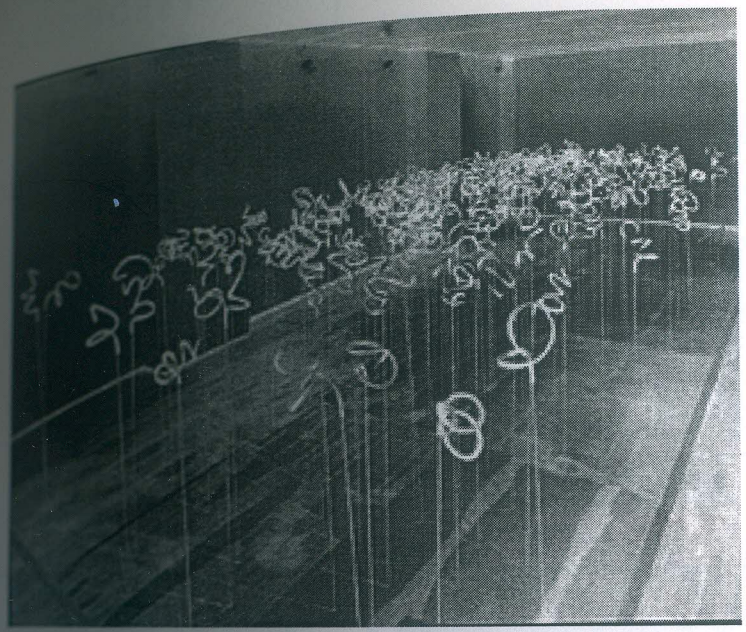
- Place : small villages near the seashore, with a few creeks which accomodate the boat building acivity. The hot, humid climate, extreme winds, greenary all through the year . A land of wonderful sunsets and skyscapes.
- Activity : nights are spent surfing deep into the sea and days little restful. The evenings are celebrations, group activities, market places are full. Fishermen typically live a community life, especially on the boat, and all related activities. They would dance together and would dress with a traditional code.
- Colour-scape : fishermen are most often very colourful, contrasting colours are quite common. The women have dark complexion and bright outfits, really a wonderful picture. Even the houses have a sense of colour particular to that zone and culture.

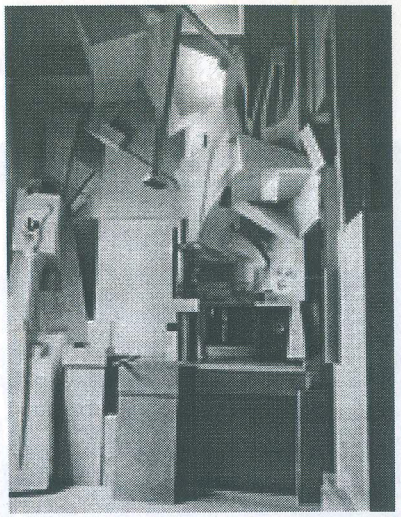
- Artefacts.: the fishing has brought in a lot of wide bamboo containers. The houses are surrounded by nets and drying fish.

So, on this end there is a world of fishermen who live with those boats and the material and each detail of theirs.

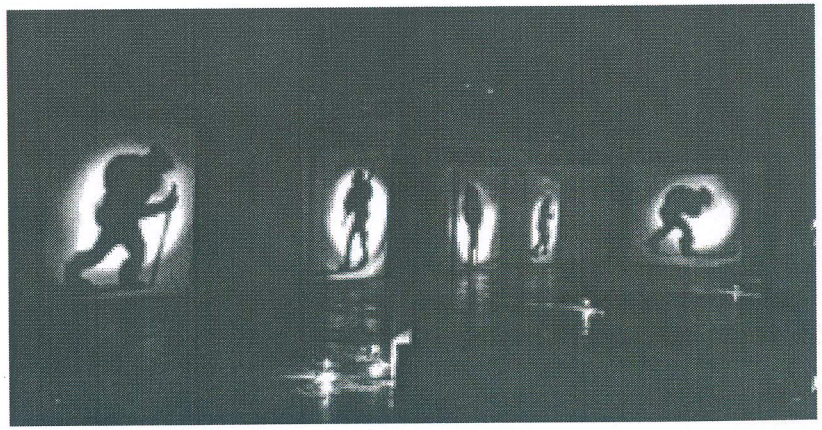
What impact would a story about a boat make on a community who lives with that specie everyday? What would their reaction be if they look at it from a differnrt angle ? In what manner would they respond to the people's feelings about the outcome of their craft ?
One can see a conflict in the viewpoint, a shift of relation from physical to psychological. There one could sense a possibility of expression that follows an incidence of reobserving and feeling differently.

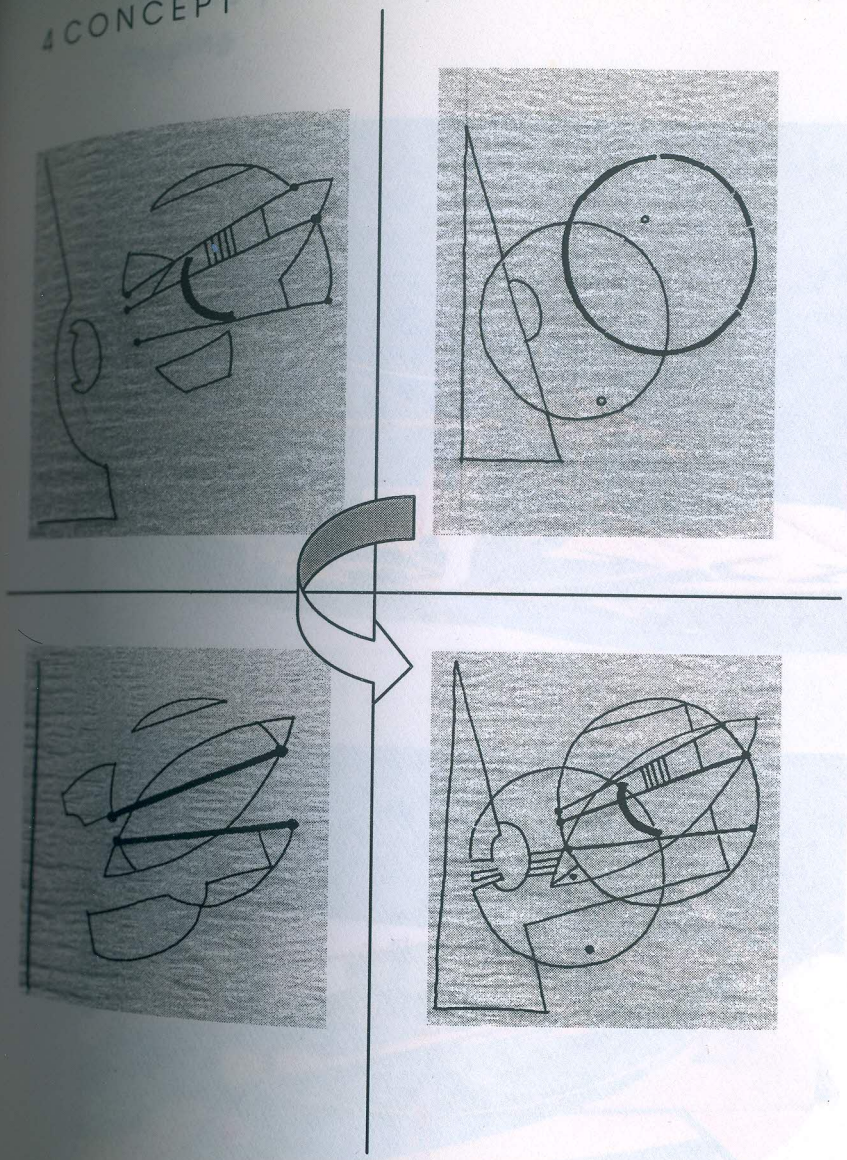
The concept of design demands a moment of that experience frozen into time, for others to watch and pass through.



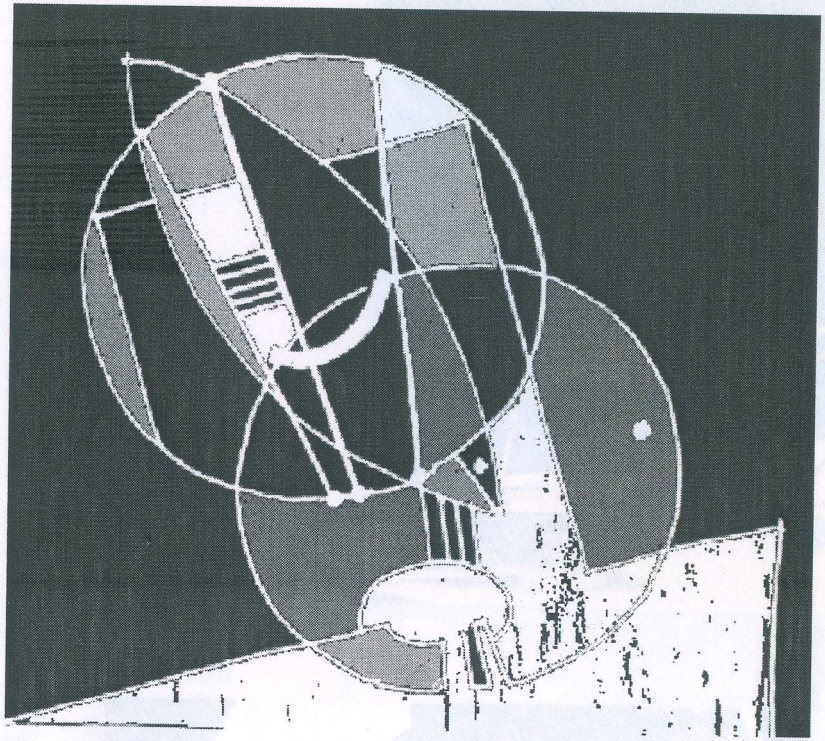


Examples of installations



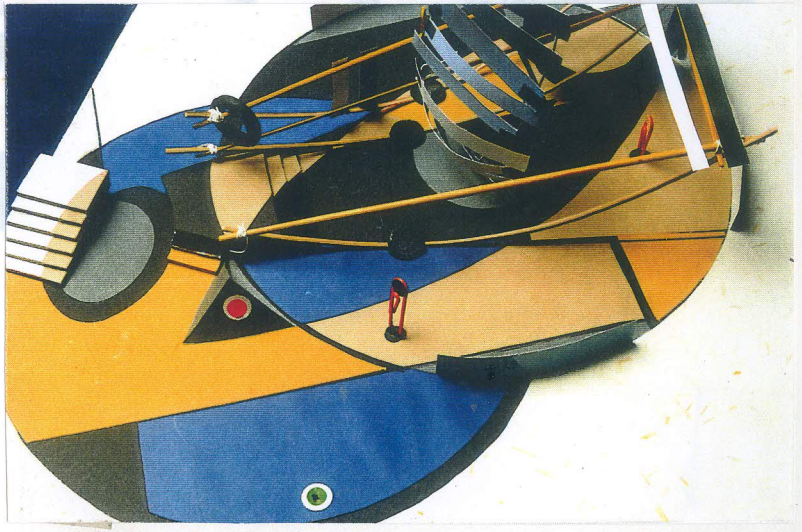


The graphic composition of the installation

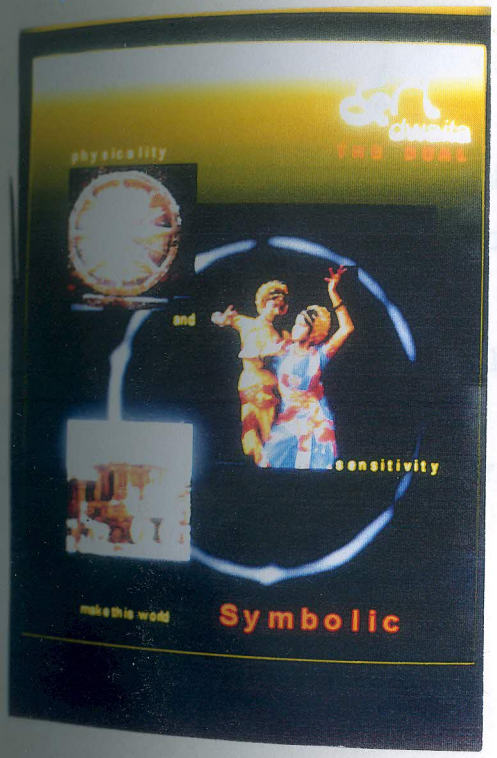


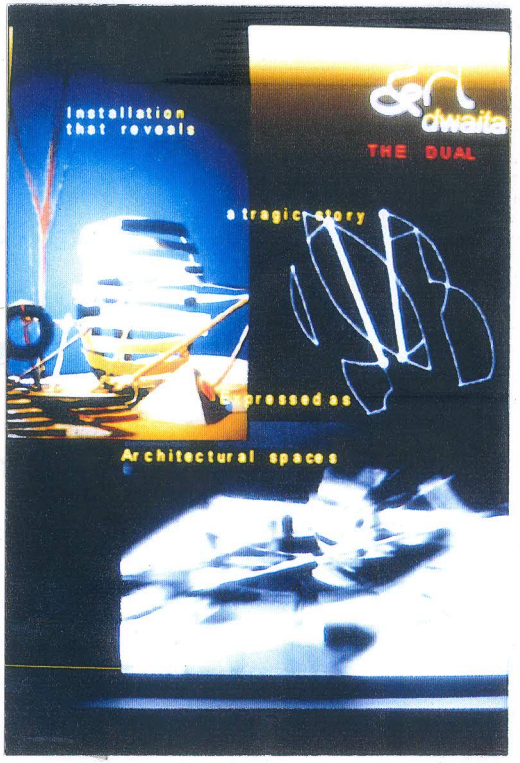
MATERIALS : Bamboo sticks, mount board strings, poster papers, b/w photo cuttings. tagpins

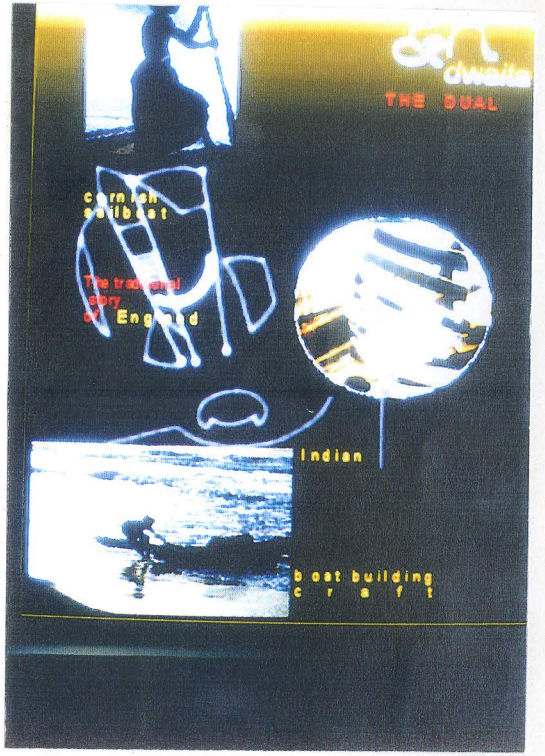
MODEL : 1:50



SLIDES :
PRESENTATION FOR
OSAKA COMPETITION 99.







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