"Med djup i fokus"
"Quest for depth"

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Examensarbete inom arkitektur, avancerad nivå 30 hp
Degree Project in Architecture, Second Level 30 credits
25 maj 2018
QUEST FOR DEPTH - Phase 1, investigation.

Depth is a word that could be interpreted in many ways. It could indicate complexity, obscurity, and intensity, something beyond what we know or see. That which lies beyond the surface. The aim of this project is to understand what constitutes a sense of depth in a space through documentation, investigation and exploration. Because to me depth is something mysterious. It could be a indication of continuation, a hint of a space beyond, an implication of activity or something that triggers our imagination.

The first part of the project was a photographic exercise. In photography depth is often described as a quality and therefore it seemed like a good way to start. Eric de Maré a famous architectural photographer also lists, contrast repetition balance, climax and cohesions as key features in a good photograph. All which I think are also important features in architecture. So in order to develop my sensibility in architectural depth I decided to practice photography. What I have done is; photographed environments in my surrounding that I think has a sense of depth. I have then analysed the photographs and attempted to break out sub-categories and reoccurring features. I’ve chosen to present the research in five categories: Openings, Contrasts, Repetition, Thresholds and leading elements. But bare in mind that these are more like ingredients to a recipe rather then its own dish.
Contrast
“Contrasts brings vitality and strength: Between dark and light, solid and void, vertical and horizontal, rough and smooth, mechanical lines and organic lines, sharp and fuzzy, plain and decorated, large and small.” Eric de Maré
Without contrast one would be unable to separate one plane or object from another. To obtain a sense of depth contrast is vital. This could be achieved through shadows, juxtaposing different materials that reflect light differently, have different types of tactility or different kind of underlying meaning.

Image Specific
Straight lines adjacent to diagonal lines and organic lines. Glossy surfaces beside rough surfaces, dark besides bright. The dark space from were the photo is taken has another atmosphere from the one we are looking into. The light pouring in from the adjacent room, reflects off the door and illuminates the bright surface of the fireplace. The curtain holds the climax of the photo, partially because of the framing but also because of its soft organic lines and shadows which is something much gentler than the harsh shadows and straight lines around it.

The fireplace, wood flooring and wrinkled curtain brings a warm, and tactile touch to the image. It does not necessarily give the space more depth, but it provides us with clues about what kind of environment this is. Rather than giving us spatial depth it gives us depth of the story.
**Contrast**

To me this space is given depth through its subtle details. Pocket of shadow at the back of the room juxtaposed to the white illuminated wall and the dark glossy windowsill. The slight chamfer in the ceiling, the bench that envelopes shadows and seamlessly becomes the wall. The profile of the pillar that reflects varying amounts of light, and the choice to expose the beam. I am intrigued by the simple plan that creates such a rich interior. So carefully detailed.
The care of details in this building creates depth through a wider span of dark and bright, as well as depth through consideration.
Two examples that sets depth through different levels of reflection.
Two images that express how material properties can enhance sensory depth.
Openings
In a factual sense, the opening provides the image with a layer, a foreground and background, thus making it easy to perceive depth. If the space beyond the opening has another set of qualities it will bring in contrast to the image, giving it further depth. But the opening also has a more mysterious quality. It is the transition between two spaces, which indicates that beyond the point of the opening a new experience awaits. When we are unaware of what is in the adjacent room, we will use the clues that are presented to us as catalyst for our imagination.

Framing is similar to the opening, but it refers to an exterior environment. Through the frame we get a sense of depth through foreground and background. The physical position of the viewpoint, the frame, and the framed object could be seen as three layers. In between these layers, spaces are defined which allows us to perceive depth through these different zones.

Image Specific
This image portrays these layers and zones to some degree. Besides the layering effect there are other clues that one starts to process, i.e. Why is the frontal opening so deep? Does it hold a secondary function? Also the hierarchy between the two openings, one being very tall with high detail, and one lower and much simpler. The shift of flooring from one room to the other, and the raised parapet in the second room. We are not told much but we know that that the space in front of us and the space to the right have different spatial statuses. It is very clever how the stair and elevator are given a secondary function, that of the threshold.
Openings.

This fairly simple plan becomes a rich space through its details. We are looking at two possible ways to go. To the right we have a simple opening, aligned with the main axis of this floor. On the left we see openings which is perpendicular to the main axis. The profile of the openings are of a more elaborate design, and together with the higher ceiling and brighter light scape it is suggesting a space of a different spatial status.
Thresholds
Thresholds is closely connected to openings and leading elements, however I regard it as more of a psychological category. The threshold marks a beginning of a transition. It is the point where we become aware of that we are moving gradually from one space to another, often mediating the transition from one type of spatial status to another. Thresholds could be designed in infinite ways and hold qualities from all the mentioned categories, but what interests me, and why I gave it its own headline is the effect it has on our spirit. Coming home, walking through a garden, entering a cemetery before a funeral or something more mundane like the waiting room at the dentist. It is a space where not just our bodies but also our emotions are in transition.

Image specific
In this image a dark narrow walkway wraps around us. The main entrance is inevitably the main focus. The stone paving creates a path where no deviations can be made. In contrast to some previous examples, there is no alternative route that could trigger our imagination, nothing to make our mind drift. We know where we are heading. We are going to move, out into the open, into the light. Moving from a protected space to an exposed. The path will take us to stair, which will elevate us to a point where we are able to enter through the heavy stone frame.

Thresholds are hard to generalize since it is tightly connected with the building intention. This building, originally being a governmental insurance building, was probably designed to have great authority. The threshold hence is designed to convey that atmosphere.
This passage creates a dark frame, and since there is a frame, there is a motif. Since the motif is not perpendicular to the frame, but at an angle, it becomes a leading element which gives the image more depth. There is something beyond what we see.

A narrow passage into a courtyard that expands. The wall has two faces. The outside, an aggregation of heavy yet finely cut pieces of stone. The inside, a fine grain plaster in an early calm tone.
**Leading Elements**

By leading elements, I refer to something that guides our vision and sense of direction. A leading element could enhance the sense of depth through perspective, for instance the converging lines of an arcade. The leading element is often related to movement. Either it sets a clear direction or as in the case of the curve it implies a continuation of the space. No matter if the leading element is a curve, a diagonal stair or a straight line through a row of pillars, the element implicates movement which is essential to sensory depth.

**Image specific**

This is a clear example of an leading element. The pillars are guiding or vision towards the large opening and that is their only job, they hold no secondary function which emphasizes the importance of the opening. (Perhaps in a banal way)

The pillars converging towards the horizon together with the path, which get narrower along the way enhances the perspective. The vegetation gives the path a variation. An organic feature which contrasts the repetitive pillar.
Leading elements, image specific:
Two very clear paths cross in this image. It is like we are being shot out of a space and left on the curb. Depth is given to the image by a layering effect combined with a distinctive set of lines; vertical, horizontal and diagonal that overlap and contrast each other. The planes, from which these lines can be distinguished, have several different directions, hence these planes reflect light differently and provide the image with a wide spectrum of light and dark.

However the image also holds a feeling of uncertainty to me. The ceiling and the fixture has a strong direction, but it is not leading us to any kind of climax. This might be enhanced by the man moving away from the centre.
In these two photos you can see how the curve has a leading quality to it.
Leading elements, material properties, repetition and strong contrasts.

Curvature, repetition and material properties working together to set up depth.
The stair combined with the dark door frame guides our attention in a very effective way.

The curve signifies continuation. The books and shelves give us a repetitive pattern to relate to.
QUEST FOR DEPTH - Phase 2, Site and program

I decided to search for a place that I think needs an intervention and lacks a sense of depth. What I found was this; Norrvikensjön, 20 minutes north of Stockholm on the way to Arlanda. Today the place is not very well taken care of even tough it holds some great qualities. Such as the lake and surrounding greenery. Popular during summer and winter, and in my mind there is no real sense of depth here. Hence a perfect place to try me methods.

Today the site is used as a kayak club, and departure point for ice skating during the winter. So my structure aims to nurture those activities. At first a tried to reverse engineer my previous research, Selecting three views from which you would approach the site, and see where I could insert new layers in order to build up depth.
Site 1:2000
Entrence from the south-east

Entrence from the north

Entrence from the South-west
QUEST FOR DEPTH - Phase 2, Site and program

I used the collage to get quick and intuitive ideas. What I brought from these photographs is:
Verticality in a few objects that can be read from afar. Revealing through obscuring. Enforcing the roads curvature. Overlapping, having surfaces wrap around each other to indicate a continuation of space. Layers, having multiple elements that by their relationship to each other, create different zones which contribute to a sense of depth. The space beyond.
QUEST FOR DEPTH - Phase 2, The Buildings

In the proposal, I’ve tried to tap into the existing fauna, and been aware of sightlines, orientation, the typology of the building that is somewhat common, but because of it does not reveal itself immediately. Because depth is something unfolding not revealing.
The program consists of a kayak storage, a gym/rental shop, a restaurant and a sauna.
The idea is that this will cater to the same functions and needs as there are today.
The three main volumes share the same structure. With in that structure, they are varied.
The aim was to create an environment with some dynamic and a close relation to its surrounding and activity. By having varied orientations of the buildings, several outdoor spaces with different qualities are created.

The typology chosen for this project was that of the wood shed. A common typology around our lakes and sports facilities. It was chosen because of its relationship to its activity and surrounding. The one story sheds, allows views of the lake, and surrounding greenery from adjacent lots.
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Plan 1:600

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Oskar Persson: Quest for depth, Studio 7

GSEducationalVersion

West facade 1:100

East facade 1:100

Gym / Rental 1:100
GSEducationalVersion

Section column/beam structure 1:100

Parti Facade 1:100

Parti Facade 1:100

Detail 1:10

Section 1:100 - free span truss

Parti Elevation 1:100

NOTICE: Drawing scales may be incorrect as all drawings have been reduced in size to fit the format of the submission.
South Facade 1:300

East facade 1:300

North Facade 1:300

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