

place and occasion

Aldo van Eyck

"There is a garden in her face." Thomas Campion

Space has no room, time not a moment for us.
We are excluded.

In order to be included – to help our homecoming – we must be gathered into their meaning
(we are the subject as well as the object of architecture).

Whatever space and time mean, place and occasion mean more.

For space in our image is place, and time in our image is occasion.

Today, space and what it should coincide with in order to become "space" – humanity at home with ourselves – are lost. Both search the same place, but cannot find it.

Provide that place.

Is humanity able to penetrate the material we organize into hard shape between one person and another, between what is here and what is there, between this and a following moment?
Is humanity able to find the right place for the right occasion?
Is humanity able to linger?

No – so start with this: articulate the in-between. Make

a welcome of each door

a countenance of each window.

Make of each a place; a bunch of places of each house and each city
(a house is a tiny city, a city a huge house).

Get closer to the shifting center of human reality and build its contraform – for each person and all people, since they no longer do it themselves
(if society has no form, who can build the city- counterform?).

Senmut, the Egyptian, made what he was commanded to make: a habitable house of granite for a single dead queen.
Are the sons and daughters of Senmut today unable to make what they are requested to make: Habitable places for the millions that live, but are no longer able to fashion their own houses with mud, no longer forced to drag granite.

Architects and urbanists have become true specialists in the art of organizing the meager.
The results draw close to crime.

The time has come for another sort.

City implies "the people that live there" – not "population".

Whoever attempts to solve the riddle of space in the abstract will construct the outline of emptiness and call it space.

Whoever attempts to meet humanity in the abstract will speak with an echo and call this dialogue.

Humans still breathe in and out.
When is architecture going to do the same?