SOCIAL POTENTIALS OF PATTERN:
CEDRIC PRICE'S FUN PALACE

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CEDRIC PRICE'S FUN PALACE

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ABSTRACT

SOCIAL POTENTIALS OF PATTERN: CEDRIC PRICE'S FUN PALACE

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The aim of the thesis is to re-read the design process of Cedric Price's Fun Palace via "patterns of utopia" in order to understand and discuss how social imagination guides practice of architecture. Social imagination, as conceptualized in this thesis, denotes the intellectual activity of critically observing the social context and utilizing available resources in favor of new social possibilities. It can be argued that architectural practice is continuously subjected to political, cultural, and financial changes, the accumulation of which may easily bring forth changes in programmatic and physical aspects of space. The thesis claims that in order to keep in pace with the extents of change and variation in social experience, architectural production requires the integration of social imagination into the design process. Keeping this in mind, patterns of utopia are conceptualized as guidelines that help the integration of social imagination into the design process. In turn, Price's Fun Palace is re-read from the scope of patterns, in order to understand the relations between social dimension of the project and how this dimension is reflected onto the design of a flexible set of programs.

Keywords: Fun Palace, Cedric Price, social imagination, program, pattern

ÖZ

KURGU MODELLERİNİN SOSYAL POTANSİYELLERİ: CEDRIC PRICE'IN FUN PALACE PROJESİ

Özkoç, Onur

Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık Bölümü

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Tezin amacı, sosyal imgelemin tasarım pratiğini nasıl yönlendirdiğini anlamak ve tartışmak üzere, ütopyanın yeniden okunması ile türetilen kurgu modellerini (*patterns*) kullanarak Cedric Price'ın Fun Palace projesini incelemektir. Tezde ele alınan sosyal imgelem kavramı, sosyal bağlamın eleştirel bir bakışla incelenmesi ve bu incelemeler ışığında mevcut imkanların yeni sosyal tecrübeler oluşturmakta kullanılmasını ifade eder. Mimari pratik, politik, kültürel ve finansal değişimlerle etkileşim halindedir. Bu değişimler, mekanın program ve fiziksel açıdan dönüşümünü de gerektirir. Tezde, sosyal deneyimin değişim ve çeşitlenme hızını yakalayabilmek için mimari üretimin sosyal imgelemi tasarım sürecine dahil etmesi gerektiği öne sürülmektedir. Buna bağlı olarak, kurgu modelleri sosyal imgelemin tasarım sürecine dahil edilmesine yardımcı olan kılavuzlar olarak ele alınmaktadır. Price'ın Fun Palace projesi kurgu modelleri üzerinden yeniden okunarak sosyal imgelem ve sosyal imgelemin esnek program tasarımlarına katkısı incelenmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Fun Palace, Cedric Price, sosyal imgelem, program, kurgu modeli (*pattern*)

To My Family

Deniz, Saniye and Ziya Özkoç

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim of the Thesis

The aim of the thesis is to re-read the design process of Cedric Price's Fun Palace via "patterns of utopia"[1] in order to examine the transformation of social imagination into practical design. Social imagination, as conceptualized in this thesis, denotes the intellectual activity of critically observing the social context and utilizing available potentials to point out new possibilities. The thesis claims that in order to keep in pace with the extents of change and variation in social experience, architectural production requires the incorporation of social imagination in the design process. Consequently, by identifying patterns regarding the role of social imagination as such, the thesis will examine Fun Palace project itself as an overall pattern that organizes complex relations between social context, program and architectural production.

Price's Fun Palace provides a significant case to study for its innovative formulation of possibilities in experience with respect to both program variety and structural organization. The project bears strong arguments regarding social experience, which are deduced from critique of the then-present milieu. Although the project has its roots in its contemporaneous context, it can be argued that the project's most important contribution is its influence on architectural discourse in the present day. Positioning physical structure as a sub-structure of social imagination (to the point of ephemerality), Price's anticipatory architecture conveys an example that still communicates strongly in the contemporary context. Keeping that in mind, it would be beneficial to briefly present the project at this point in order to discuss how

[1] "Pattern" and its conception within utopia will be discussed in detail later in this study in light of: Nathaniel Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Fun Palace is relevant for this study, and how it continues to provide a case to learn from in the present day.

1.2 Case: Fun Palace

> During a drive up to Cambridge in October 1961, the internationally renowned British theatre director Joan Littlewood tells her new friend Cedric Price about her lifelong dream. She envisages an alternative kind of social space, an experimental space where the public can freely interact in new ways, endlessly stimulating their creativity and broadening their knowledge. As if in passing, she wonders whether architecture might play a role.[2]

Fun Palace is a proposition for an alternative educational leisure center that is designed to facilitate various programmatic and spatial reconfigurations initiated by its users (figure 1.1). The project is significant for its radical interpretation of leisure and learning as intertwined concepts, rather than focusing on one or the other as most of its contemporaries (which were usually conventional buildings such as sports halls). By critically observing the social and cultural context of post World War Two Britain,[3] Fun Palace, in Tim Anstey's words, "…was to be a building with an open programme providing entertainment to 'everyman' whose form and organisation should be steered, and altered, by that mass will".[4]

As Mark Wigley enlivens in his curatorial statement for "Exhibition: Cedric Price – The Fun Palace", the project began as the brainchild of the avant-garde theater director Joan Littlewood when she expressed her idea of an alternative kind of social program to the young architect Price in 1961. She proposed that "…spontaneous and unscripted experiences could prove far more effective in raising political consciousness than conventional theatre".[5] The idea

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[2] Mark Wigley, "Exhibition: Cedric Price - The Fun Palace," Curatorial Statement, Columbia University: Arthur Ross Architecture Gallery, Buell Hall, 19 September 2005, http://www.arch.columbia.edu/gsap/54880 (accessed 22 December 2007). Please note that the date Littlewood explained Price her ideas is stated as 1961 in most sources, however Price states the year as 1962 in a later interview with Stanley Mathews: Stanley J. Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain: The Social Vision of Cedric Price's Fun Palace and Potteries Thinkbelt" (Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, 2003), 102.

[3] The decline in industrial production, brain-drain, lag in technological developments, lower work rates and fewer work hours can be listed as some of the key issues of the context. A detailed discussion of the contemporaneous context is presented in the third chapter of this thesis.

[4] Tim Anstey, "Where is the Project? Cedric Price on Architectural Action", in *Critical Architecture*, eds. Jane Rendell, Jonathan Hill, et al, (London: Routledge, 2007), 220.

[5] Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 29.

was to facilitate social experience and awareness through fun, an approach considerably close to Bertold Brecht's conception of theater in aiming to abandon the conventional boundaries between the actor and the spectator. [6] Hence the Fun Palace program would need to be carefully designed so as to stimulate activity among individuals, leading them to recognize their own potentials and thus providing a more optimistic self-motivation. In this respect, the project can be seen as a concretization of Littlewood's background on the social role of theater (particularly based on her agit-prop street performance experiences with Theatre Workshop), proceeding through what she would call the list of delights the century owed the people.[7]

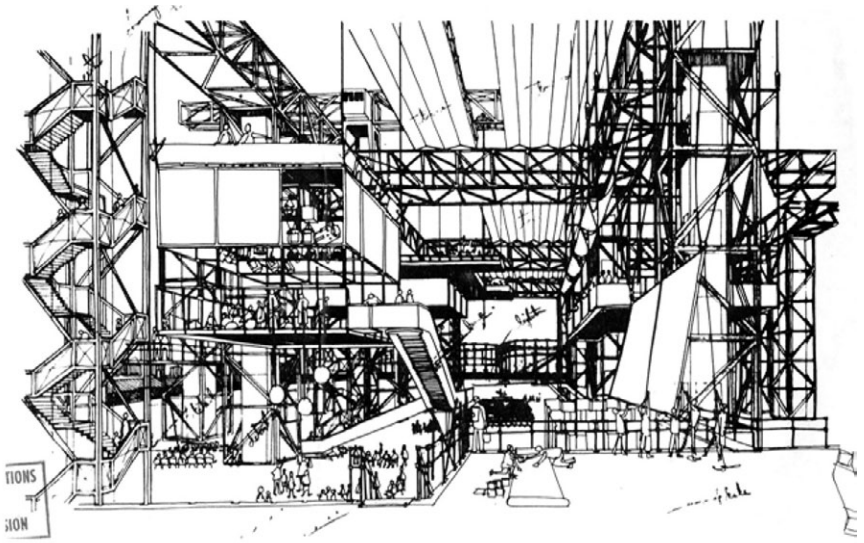

Figure 1.1 Fun Palace section, Cedric Price, 1964. Source: Stanley Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research*; 2005, Vol. 3 Issue 2, 75, in EBSCOhost. Online Service, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=18346584&site=ehost-live (accessed 30 December 2007)

Consequently, Price was very interested in Littlewood's idea. He eventually recognized that "her idea would require a radically new kind of interactive and variable architecture, highly adaptable

[6] Brecht was known to be a considerable influence on Littlewood. Briefly put, Brecht argued that theatre should embody the "…bemused detachment of a beer hall audience" in order to establish effective communication with the audience.

[7] Joan Littlewood, *Joan's Book: Joan Littlewood's Peculiar History as She tells It*, (London: Methuen Drama, 2003), 640

to the rapidly shifting cultural landscape of England now [1960s] and in the future."[8] Mary Lou Lobsinger remarks on the subject that "Littlewood's desire for a new kind of theatrical venue where her performances could flourish unconstrained by built form became the inspiration for Price's architectural imagination."[9] Hence, the idea of a continuously self-reconfiguring program inspired Price to devise an anticipatory architecture, which harmoniously reconfigured itself in order to respond to users' demands. In an interview with Monica Pidgeon, Price describes Fun Palace as a structure capable of alterations to contain a variety of activities:

> […] I tried to achieve an effect of large mechanized shipyard in which various structures could be built from above by means of gantries, traveling cranes, and intermediate beams. And these structures would contain the activities as shown, simple in themselves, but would, through their design, be capable of being altered while the building was occupied and that the access to such structures could be achieved by means of escalators which radiated through 270 degrees from the ground level: the whole structure therefore being constantly changing, and such change being achieved by resort of techniques, materials, and technologies already at that time available in advanced engineering in ship building and aircraft production.[10]

Thus featuring a radical program coupled by an equally radical approach to architecture, Fun Palace marks an exceptional break with contemporaneous practices. Stanley Mathews remarks the social imagination of the project by arguing that "Price's architecture not only reflected the changing character of British society in those heady times, but it also acted as a catalyst to expedite social transformation.[11] Combining all the social and political input from the context, Price and Littlewood proposed a way out from the contemporaneous struggle with learning and wasting of leisure time. In Littlewood's words, their program was "designed to awaken the passive subjects of mass culture to a new consciousness."[12] They were proposing

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[8] Stanley J. Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research*; 2005, Vol. 3 Issue 2, 78, in EBSCOhost. Online Service, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=18346584&site=ehost-live (accessed 30 December 2007).

[9] Mary Louise Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance: Cedric Price's Fun Palace," in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, eds. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejéan Legault (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 128.

[10] Cedric Price, Interview by Monica Pidgeon, MP3, BD Online, http://www.bdonline.co.uk/Journals/Builder_Group/Building_Design/05_April_2007/attachments/Price01.mp3 (accessed 12 July 2009).

[11] Stanley J. Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain: The Social Vision of Cedric Price's Fun Palace and Potteries Thinkbelt" (Ph.D. diss. Columbia University, 2003), 1.

[12] Ibid., 7.

"a university of the streets,"[13] in which learning and leisure would be interconnected – knowledge would be piped through jukeboxes.[14] This would not only provide a more constructive use of leisure time but also open up educational possibilities for every social layer of the society, thus stating a very important argument on learning: learning should be available to everyone, not just privileged groups. Besides, although the Fun Palace was offering alternative approaches for education and constructive use of leisure time –which politicians and educators were also propagating–, it was against any imposition of how time would be spent. On this particular aspect, by giving people the freedom of choosing how to learn or spend their own time, Fun Palace constitutes what Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault describe as "an ongoing theater of spontaneous self expression: [where] boundaries between consumption, public display, and private reflection would collapse".[15]

It can be argued that the radical position of Fun Palace is rooted in critical observations of the "prolonged [postwar] identity crisis for Britain and the British."[16] Along with a critical assimilation of the contemporaneous context, however, the programmatic possibilities of Fun Palace incorporate 1960s emergent notions such as communications, mobility, and flexibility into architectural design.[17] Writing in 1970 on the extensions of these notions emphasized in Fun Palace (i.e. plug-in cities), Alvin Toffler comments that the society is moving in the direction of increased temporality:

> The ultimate is an entire urban agglomeration freed from fixed position, floating on a cushion of air, powered by nuclear energy, and changing its inner shape even more rapidly than New York does today.

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[13] Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," *The Drama Review: TDR* 12, no.3 (Spring 1968): 130, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0012962%28196821%2912%3A3%3C127%3ATFP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8 (accessed 30 December 2007).

[14] Ibid. Among some of the possible activities within Fun Palace, Price and Littlewood list "games and tests that psychologists and electronics engineers now devise for the service of industry and war… free instruction, recordings for anyone […] jam sessions, jazz festivals, poetry and dance […] science playground where visitors can attend lecture-demonstrations supported by teaching films" and many others.

[15] Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault, "Introduction: Critical Themes of Postwar Modernism," in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, eds. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 17.

[16] Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," 76.

[17] Diana Agrest, *Architecture from Without: Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice*, (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1991), 69.

> Whether or not precisely these visions become reality, the fact is that the society is moving in this direction. The extension of the throw-away culture, the creation of more and more temporary structures, the spread of modularism are proceeding apace, and they all conspire toward the same psychological end: the ephemeralization of man's links with the things that surround him.[18]

Toffler's argument makes it clear that in the contemporaneous context, Fun Palace presents a case of anticipatory architecture oriented towards future possibilities. In doing so, he also explains that the physical structures of these anticipatory architectures are in fact based on social context (i.e. throw-away culture). It can therefore be argued that Fun Palace conceptualizes architecture as a servicing kit by interpreting the potential change in social experience as the main organizing factor. As such, architecture becomes a structure that utilizes contemporary potentials (of variables such as rate of communications, development of technical availabilities, etc.) as its substructures in service of social imagination. From this point of view, it can be argued that although Fun Palace interprets and addresses the social context of 1960s Britain, the idea of interpreting the social context and utilizing contemporary potentials in service of social imagination provides a case to learn from in the present day. Concepts such as communications, mobility, and flexibility still sustain significance in the contemporary context, experienced in an alteration of what Toffler calls "throw-away culture". Lobsinger approvingly argues that "[i]n the 1960s, as today, the Fun Palace offers architects a challenging conception of architecture that privileges organization and idea over architecture as built form."[19] It is precisely the privileging of "organization and idea over architecture as built form" that underlines Fun Palace as a significant case at present to learn from the incorporation of social imagination into design.

Although Fun Palace has not been built, Price's critical observations of the context and the design's social potentials render the project influential for theoreticians and practitioners alike.[20] As the programmatic arguments precede architectural form, the design process of Fun Palace –

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[18] Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock*, (New York: National General Co., 1970), 63.

[19] Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance," 134.

[20] To name a few, it is well known that Price's work has been influential to Archigram, Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, Rem Koolhaas and many other contemporary practitioners. It is also remarkable that Price's work was positioned as a model for reconsideration of old East German Parliament, in the conference "Fun Palace Berlin 200x" organised by Berlin architects Philipp Oswalt and Philipp Misselwitz. An evaluation of the conference is available in: Philip Christou, "Making Fun of Buildings," *Building Design*, October 29, 2004, 25, http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=727866861&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=37478&RQT=309&VName=PQD (accessed 30 Dec. 2007).

more than the end product– is a significantly promising case for examining social imagination. Anstey points out insightfully that the design of Fun Palace is rather an inquiry into the essence of the problems than physical solutions:

> The archive related to 'Fun Palace' […] shows that architectural action, and the intention that produces it, may become manifest not through the composition of 'lines and angles' that define a physical composition solving given problems (societal, formal or technical), but in revealing, and adjusting, the substructures that designate those problems.[21]

1.3 Social Imagination and Patterns

As it has been pointed out, the thesis will examine the role of social imagination in the design process of Fun Palace via patterns. It would therefore be convenient at this point to introduce how these terms are adopted and conceptualized in this study.

The thesis approaches utopia as a medium of critical social imagination, which provides guidelines for the practice of alternative architectural programs. The conception of utopia in this thesis, adopted from Nathaniel Coleman's elaborated redefinition (introduced in his book *Utopias and Architecture*), is emancipated from conventional limitations such as impracticability or imperativeness. Indebted to Siegfried Giedion and Paul Ricoeur's descriptions of critical social imagination, in this study Coleman's re-reading of utopia is conceived as a liminal stage between the existing conditions and renewed ones, in which the designer critically interprets his/her observations and assesses them as design potentials.

In turn, the thesis utilizes the elaborated contemporary definition for discovering intellectual patterns in Fun Palace. A pattern refers to a system of interrelated ideas that function as guidelines for the development and organization of design concerns.[22] In this respect, patterns are influential in the design process, but they do not require total or actual

[21] Tim Anstey, "Where is the Project? Cedric Price on Architectural Action", in *Critical Architecture*, eds. Jane Rendell, Jonathan Hill, et al, (London: Routledge, 2007), 222.

[22] It may also require clarification that the conception of patterns in this thesis differs from Christopher Alexander's well-known study on patterns. Alexander provides patterns as guidelines to help in the solution of a problem. To be more specific, Alexander's *A Pattern Language* provides important points to consider in the solution of a design problem. Coleman's patterns, on the other hand, are rather intended to stimulate further meditation on the problem in order to grasp a thorough understanding of the design concerns. In turn, Coleman's patterns are intended to come up with new alternatives through reconsideration, whereas Alexander's patterns point out the solution of a design problem. In this respect, Coleman's patterns indicate an ongoing study that reconfigures itself through experience and meditation.

realization. As such, patterns can be used for understanding, interpreting, and guiding designs. In this respect, patterns can be considered as tools that ascertain the interpretation and inclusion of social imagination in design.

1.4 Disposition

The introductory chapter of this thesis aims to present the overall position of this study in light of its core references. The aim of the thesis and the study method are briefly introduced, following a concise introduction to Fun Palace, social imagination and the conception of patterns.

Based on the redefinition of utopia, the second chapter elaborates on the conception of patterns. Possible conflicts emerging from negative connotations of conventional utopia are discussed and clarified. This chapter also aims to situate patterns along with the design ideals of Fun Palace through comparative studies with critical conceptions of Price. Hence, the second chapter aims to produce the necessary tools to use in the analysis part.

The third chapter introduces the contextual conditions in the post-war Britain. Considering the social, political and cultural changes in the structure of the British society, this part of the study intends to point out potential influences on Price. The reflections of the zeitgeist on Price are later interpreted in the analysis part of the study. To clarify, this chapter of the thesis founds the relations between the design process of Fun Palace and its social context.

The fourth chapter combines the deductions from the second and third chapters to analyze the design process of Fun Palace. Employing the utopian patterns (defined in the second chapter), the design process of Fun Palace is examined in relation to its social context (remarked in the third chapter). By a series of inter-connected analyses, this chapter studies the design process of the social program and the physical structure of the Fun Palace in relation with each other. The representations of the project are also considered in relation to the patterns studied. The chapter concludes with a discussion relating the inferences made via patterns to the contemporaneous social milieu.

The concluding chapter summarizes the inferences of the study by considering the preceding chapters together. Consequently, potential benefits and contemporary relevance of the study are briefly discussed with reference to the project analysis.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL POTENTIALS OF PATTERN

In his introduction to *Planning for Diversity and Choice*, Stanford Anderson argues that although it would be an impossible task to elucidate the societal context of the future, architects should still be aware that every design they make –even if based on contemporary realities– sets certain constraints on the near future:

> Even the creation of a physical structure that was self-adapting and always in perfect harmony with rapidly changing needs would be to participate in an attitude about the future. This would be the attitude that there is nothing in society that deserves any degree of permanence –nothing that should control or brake or test possible changes.[23]

Keeping this in mind, he adds that architects' primary concern should be inventing and testing ideas on possibilities and possible futures, thereby growing in knowledge. Such intellectual practice, in Anderson's words, "calls for the creativity of a brilliant utopian."[24]

Following Anderson's argument on invention of possible futures, it would not be irrelevant to suggest that a project rooted in "the reality of the city as a substitute Utopia"[25] can be studied under a utopian perspective. Furthermore, by requiring both critical seizure of the present social context and invention of possibilities towards betterment of the existing social reality, patterns of utopia correspond to the design process of Fun Palace. However, studying Fun Palace via patterns deceivingly seems paradoxical for various reasons. A rather important point is directly related to Price in the first place. It is not rare information that

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[23] Stanford Anderson, introduction to *Planning for Diversity and Choice*, ed. Stanford Anderson. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1968), 5.

[24] Ibid., 7.

[25] Rem Koolhaas, introduction to *Re:CP*, ed. Cedric Price and Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 6.

Price purposefully stays away from any notion of utopia, even to the extent of declaring utopia design a crime. Arata Isozaki quotes Price:

> If today writing about utopias is a sign of spiritual desolation, then planning them must be a criminal act. [26]

Price's sarcastic statement clearly displays the urgent need for reconsidering Fun Palace and patterns together. It should be underlined beforehand that the intention of this study is neither classifying Price's work as utopian, nor studying it via an irrelevant discourse. Rather, the intention is to present that considering Fun Palace's social, cultural and political concerns, it can be reevaluated in terms of patterns, which are derived from the constitutive reading of utopia. Consonantly, although appearing contradictory at first, a closer investigation reveals that the conception of patterns is actually harmonious with the design ideas embedded in Fun Palace. The implicit consonance between these two could be revealed at least partially through a brief retracing of Price's objections and the emancipated conception of utopia as adopted in this thesis.

2.1 Critical Social Imagination

> Utopianism is so often associated with impossible dreams that its real concern, the quality of present conditions with an eye toward how existing social reality might be positively transformed to emphasize its best aspects, is generally neglected if not forgotten outright.[27]

> There is a world-wide trend toward creating centers of social activity, and this calls for far more from the architect than just technical capacity. […] Today the architect has to anticipate needs and to solve problems that exist only half consciously in the crowd. This involves great responsibility. The architect has to have the rare gift of a peculiar sensitivity that we would like to term *social imagination*.[28]

Giedion writes in 1967 (notably, Fun Palace's design process began in 1961) that architects following "the world-wide trend toward creating centers of social activity" are required to understand and devise solutions to social problems that "exist only half consciously in the crowd." The means to achieve the critical designs defined by Giedion as "social

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[26] Arata Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System," in *Re:CP*, ed. Cedric Price and Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 25.

[27] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 253.

[28] Siegfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* 5th edition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 542-43. Emphasis added.

imagination," comprises a common concern with Karl Mannheim, who defines utopia's role as initializing change through social imagination.[29] Hence, what Mannheim considers an essential feature of utopia, Giedion assigns to practicing architects. The latter describes architects' role as the function of utopia as defined by the former. In other words, Giedion mentions a need for social imagination, which according to Mannheim depends upon utopia to flourish.

By conceptualizing social imagination as the link between constitutive utopia and practice, an important course of inquiry is revealed: Price's position towards the socio-historical context in which he worked. Mathews, in his article on Potteries Thinkbelt project –which is evaluated as a continuation of Price's ideas in Fun Palace,[30]– writes "[a]s social instrument, Price's architecture is informed by his ethical and polemical perceptions of the fluidity of contemporary social, political and economic contexts."[31] Furthermore, Price was not only a careful observer of the context in which his projects stood, but also a skillful designer integrating his inferences in his designs. In Mathews' words, "…Price proposed a radically new concept of architecture and redefined the ways in which the architect might enhance human life, extend human potential, and promote social change."[32]

Regarding Price's sensibility on social context, it has been presented beforehand that Fun Palace proposes a democratization of education and leisure, to the extent of letting individuals improvise their own activities and spaces. Besides, it has been pointed out in the preceding chapter that Price's primary input for design is the social structure, as he argues that "the valid social life of the activity that one is asked to shelter or encourage is the governing factor of whatever is produced, and that need not always be a building."[33] At this point, a conflict rising from the definition of utopia should be clarified. Concerning the

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[29] For further reading see: Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia; An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Brace and World, 1966).

[30] Mary Louise Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of the Performance," *Daidalos* 74 (2000): 24.

[31] Stanley Mathews, "Potteries Thinkbelt: An Architecture of Calculated Uncertainty," in *Arquitecturas Silenciosas: Thinkbelt de Cedric Price* (Madrid: Fundación COAM, 2001), http://people.hws.edu/mathews/ potteries_thinkbelt.htm (accessed 30 Dec. 2007).

[32] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 1.

[33] Price, "Response From the Architects," in *Planning for Diversity and Choice*, ed. Stanford Anderson. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1968), 287.

participatory social foundation of Fun Palace, an objection might be made that utopia brings forth arguments about the ideal life, which is suggestive of an authoritative power over individuals. On the contrary, conceptualization of utopia through patterns sustains a critical distance from the present conditions to provide room for elaboration, thus pointing out further alternatives (and no particular single track). Coleman suggestively argues that utopian patterns elaborate on "how architects can offer a setting able to contain the continual elaboration and invention of social action."[34]

Hence, it would be seen that in arguing for continual elaboration of social action, Coleman's conceptualization of patterns are considerably proximate with Price's social concerns in Fun Palace. To remind, just as "Price conceived his architecture within a matrix of social, political, and economic contexts that made his work unusually relevant to the major issues of the period,"[35] Coleman's utopian models "…are established in terms of current conditions but are highly critical of them. Utopias theorize transformation."[36] Therefore, it can be stated that both Price and Coleman suggest a critical observation of the social context, through which betterment of the social conditions can be sought.

2.2 Patterns versus Prescriptions: Adaptability and Applicability

Another point of interest can be raised upon further elaboration on the aspect of social concerns, specifically on the transitional phase from imagination (theoretical background) to real (actual practice). If a critical attitude towards the present social conditions forms one common dimension, then that of theorizing how to achieve the transformation forms a second one. In terms of relating theoretical background to actual practice, Price carefully avoids any intellectual activity that might lead to totalizing or inadaptable designs. Correspondingly, the conception of utopia as adopted in this thesis is based on a constructive rather than imperative use of critical imagination. It is also argued in the thesis that patterns read as suggestive inferences would further inspire alternative tracks to follow. Introducing this approach into critical reading brings forth another creative tool for deciphering designs. An enlightening example of this approach is introduced to Thomas More's *Utopia* by George M. Logan:

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[34] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 5.

[35] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 9.

[36] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 24.

> For the debate of Book I [of More's *Utopia*], the primary formal models are the dialogues of Plato – and, perhaps even more, those of Cicero. Like *Utopia*, and unlike the Platonic exemplars, Cicero's dialogues consist mainly of long speeches punctuated by brief interruptions, and are more concerned with expounding alternative positions rather than with reaching definite and prescriptive conclusions.[37]

Coleman integrates a similar thinking into architectural context. He argues that utopia should be conceived as a tool that provides guidelines as to how its transformative potential can be mobilized, rather than enforcing strict "prescriptions" for practice.[38] It is holistic thinking on patterns, not necessarily of a formalist nature, but of a unity of social, cultural and political concerns that form the basis of its transformative potential. That is, patterns should be conceived as tools that are able to inspire the architect, guide designs and "remain intelligible after construction,"[39] rather than being on-the-spot prescriptions. In fact, Coleman's point presents that reading utopias through patterns or prescriptions account for one of the major separations between constitutive and pathological dimensions of utopia. He argues "[u]topia turns mean, pathological, when the model of a superior situation, which it puts forward *must* be fully realized. The 'all or nothing' demand commonly associated with utopian projection taints its constitutive potential."[40] Conceptualized this way, patterns make possible the reassessment of various scales of practice without necessitating a strict and total transformation. In Coleman's words:

> […] re-reading of utopia and architecture presented here [in *Utopias and Architecture*] is the re-conceptualization of utopias as offering a comprehensible or configuring picture able to assist individual and group organization of thought and action without requiring total application of any picture all at once, or ever.[41]

A conception of utopia freed from the negative connotations of inadaptability, totalization, and inapplicability makes possible the examination of a wider set of architecture from an alternative perspective. Furthermore, as the social constitution of utopia does not need to be a total one, it can exist even within single projects, setting the course for a fresh position

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[37] George M. Logan, introduction to *Utopia,* by Sir Thomas More, ed. George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), xviii.

[38] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 29.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 2.

[41] Ibid., 237.

within the social context. As Coleman argues, every single project the architect designs is affected by his/her conception of how the world should be, therefore every single project might possess a concern for constituting its social context.

> Conceptualizing utopias as a gap in between existing conditions and renewed ones suggests that their value does not lie in direct application. More precisely, utopian deviation might hint at exactly the place architect could return to recollect a social dimension for their labours, making it possible to imagine an architecture that could effectively resist technocratic excess (so prevalent during the first half of the twentieth century) and formalistic excess (as prevalent now as during the second half of the twentieth century).[42]

It can be observed that Coleman positions utopian patterns as the mediating phase between material reality of the present and renewed conditions set forth by critical imagination. Utopia is seen as a "gap" in which the architect recollects "a social dimension." In spite of being susceptible to ideological misuse (which will be focused on later), the free space suggested by gaps may as well be emancipated through creative use, as observed in Price's use of the term "gap". Price argues that buildings should be able to adapt to varying needs of individuals, and should provide "gaps of uncertainty in which the individual can participate."[43] Consistently, in Fun Palace he proposes a structure that generates numerous possibilities of spatial arrangements that make "gaps of uncertainty" possible. These various possibilities of spatial arrangements arise from the intellectual framework set by Price, which is suggestive of a set of guidelines. The point is that Price's approach to individual freedom of action can be read as a similar position to the freedom ensured to architects by Coleman's "gaps." Furthermore, the very decision to allow free participation of users is ensured to Price by the critical design "gap" (the social dimension that he returns to recollect information) between the existing situation and the proposed one. In a very brief sense, on theoretical level, Price's notion that individuals should be encouraged to participate freely in social processes acts as a pattern to generate his projects. In turn, Fun Palace itself defines a unity of social, political and cultural concerns, which provide a referential set of ideas to guide actual practice. In this sense, it would not be irrelevant to argue that these set of ideas can be studied via patterns.

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[42] Ibid., 89.

[43] Price, "The Invisible Sandwich," in *Re:CP*, ed. Cedric Price and Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 13.

Patterns and praxis can be conceptualized as counterparts providing feedback to each other. In pointing out the possibility of evaluating patterns' potentials through individual projects, Coleman shares a common concern with Anderson, as Anderson argues that architects' problem should be "invention and testing of possibilities for an evolving, pluralistic society."[44] By emancipating the definition of utopia, Coleman's approach makes evaluation of utopian patterns possible through individual projects. Thus being open to evaluation both in forms of mental and actual practice, utopian patterns can keep in pace with the evolution of social conditions and adapt to various requirements through self criticism.[45] In other words, as well as constituting the social context, utopian patterns themselves can be reshaped by their social context.

Reassessing architecture and its interactions with its social context from this perspective transforms utopia from an impracticable nostalgia to a tool leading to a better understanding of the social role of architecture. Thus, Coleman suggests that utopia should be conceived as patterns, which can adapt and shape various acts of creativity without imposing any specific form over another. Yet, adaptability and exposition to social practice reveals another important subject to be included in the discussion, namely the issue of social programming in the milieu of present socioeconomic structures.

2.3 Social Programming: The Present and the Proposed

Regarding social context and the role of architecture, a rather important course of discussion is raised from the tension between programmatic possibilities and contemporaneous social conditions. Put very briefly, the issue at hand is that of architecture's social relevance to the political and economic reality: Can architecture be discordant with the political and economic frameworks in which it is experienced? Are patterns able to lead to social transformation through social elaboration? Or in other words, does architecture contain the power to fuel the practice of social imagination?

In the era of reorganization of social relations according to production cycles and consumerism, the architect's role as social designer has risen much debate leading to

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[44] Anderson, introduction to *Planning for Diversity and Choice*, 7. It should be noted that Anderson's arguments here refer to "critical utopianism," which is conceptualized by I.C. Jarvie.

[45] I.C. Jarvie, "Utopian Thinking and the Architect," in *Planning for Diversity and Choice*, ed. Stanford Anderson (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1968), 8-31.

controversial positions. Designed at a time of post war economy and capitalist strategies, Fun Palace's proposition of alternative social experience renders the debate requisite for analyses of the project's social dimensions. Of considerable influence on the subject is Manfredo Tafuri's deciphering of capitalist reorganization of meaning and content, and inescapably, the phase of commodification. It is well known that Tafuri attains a pessimistic attitude towards the role of architecture in the era of capitalist development:

> It should be stated immediately that the critical analysis of the basic principles of contemporary architectural ideology does not pretend to have any 'revolutionary' aim. What is of interest here is the precise identification of those tasks which capitalist development has taken away from architecture. That is to say, what it has taken away in general from ideological pre-figuration. With this, one is led almost automatically to the discovery of what may well be the 'drama' of architecture today: that is, to see architecture obliged to return to *pure architecture*, to form without utopia; in the best cases, to sublime uselessness.[46]

In his *Architecture and Utopia*, Tafuri points out to a crucial reduction in the role of architecture that parallels the emergence and evolution of capitalism. He explains the aporia that either presented against or for organizational schemes of capitalism, architecture ends up reconciling the contradictions inherent within the system. Hence, architecture is depraved of utopia and ideological prefiguration. In his own words, "…once come within the sphere of the reorganization of production in general, architecture and urbanism would have to be the objects and not the subjects of the Plan."[47]

According to Tafuri, the role to be taken by architecture was the critique of ideology (or utopia), so as to survive the commodification and emptying of meaning enforced by capitalism. He argues that in order to survive the enforcements of capitalism, architecture must be freed from "ideological dress," returning to "pure architecture, to form without utopia; in the best cases, to sublime uselessness." By this way, architecture "…evades the impossibility of meaning by being empty; it resists the marketplace by being silent."[48] As a result, architecture cannot escape being utilized by mechanisms of capitalism for its own interests, which leads to the pessimistic conclusion that architecture can not facilitate social transformation at any level.

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[46] Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*, trans. Barbara Luigia La Penta (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1976), ix.

[47] Ibid., 100.

[48] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 72.

If one considers that Fun Palace has been credited for qualities such as "redefining the ways in which the architect might enhance human life, extend human potential, and promote social change,"[49] an interesting thread of arguments regarding architects' role in the social organization of practice is revealed. Among the various elaborations on this subject, two works initiated by Emilio Ambasz -during his curatorial period at the Museum of Modern Arts in New York (MoMA)-[50] would particularly be of interest for this study. It is seen in the outlines of the MoMA international symposium in 1972 titled "Universitas,"[51] and the exhibition titled "Italy: The New Domestic Landscape" held in the same year, that Ambasz maintains an optimistic stance compared to that of Tafuri. While pursuing a productive role for architecture in social invention, Ambasz does not reject Tafuri's arguments, but rather acknowledges certain points illustrated by the Italian historian. Moreover, Ambasz's efforts in relating technology, architecture and social context provides a proper framework that embodies both Tafuri's arguments regarding utopia and ideology, and the social enthusiasm inherent in projects such as Fun Palace.

Ambasz's conciliatory approach reveals itself clearly in the framework he presents in the Universitas symposium. The symposium questioned the role of architecture in the emerging technological milieu, in terms of answering the need to adapt various requirements of and modifications by the social actors. He made the point that post-technological society should be able to use the possibilities brought about by innovations for serving human values. Ambasz argues that the role of designers is to introduce transactional devices that present alternate futures. Among the examples given as providing an explicit "inventory of qualities of urban existence," Ambasz notes Fun Palace as one of the superstructures that would define "City of Open Presents." An open present would be possible "only when design did not determine the final form but, rather, merely set forth an open structure."[52] Hence it would

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[49] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 1.

[50] Emilio Ambasz served as New York MoMA curator between 1970-76.

[51] The symposium brought together professionals from various disciplines, including architecture, sociology, economics, history of art, physics, philosophy and legal theory, so the perspectives of different disciplines could be discussed from a larger framework. Among the participants were Umberto Eco, Henri Lefebvre, Jean Baudrillard, Manuel Castells and many other highly regarded authors.

[52] Felicity D. Scott, *Architecture or Techno-Utopia: Politics After Modernism* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007), 96.

be seen that Ambasz's interpretation of Fun Palace is considerably close to the definition of patterns embodied in this study.

The influence of Tafuri on Ambasz can also be seen in his conciliation of optimistic and pessimistic interpretations on individuals' surrender to technology. Tafuri would later refer to this relation in his text for the "Italy: The New Domestic Landscape" exhibition catalogue.[53] In his writing, Tafuri argues that by offering advanced participation via new technological systems (such as cybernetics, as also introduced in Fun Palace), architects actually incorporated micro-networks of control that "rationalized" every "irrational" option. Thus, Tafuri points out that the tools for adaptability can also be misused as a control mechanism. Ambasz, on the other hand, attains an optimistic approach. He believes that these innovations widen the scope of designers for they display new sets of possibilities through experimentations. Furthermore, while experimenting, they do not detach themselves totally from the present. On the contrary, they inherit an awareness of the socioeconomic conditions (the effect of which had been explained by Tafuri), yet still propose alternative formulations that would not be confined to contemporaneous political experience:

> In the counter-design proposals Ambasz recognized a diverse set of strategies for operating within the existing socioeconomic and technological systems, while aiming to transform them. The designers subscribed neither to historical avant-garde strategies of opposition (now regarded as ineffectual because of the totalized condition) nor to the modernist ideals of technologically driven progress (rendered even more disturbing by the nature of a new generation of technology). Rather, their strategies involved an imperative for architecture to remain engaged with those systems while not just submitting to them.[54]

Hence it would be seen that Ambasz's approach envisions the use of technological availabilities to serve the incorporation of social imagination into actual practice. As such, his visions are interestingly harmonious with the social concern and utilization of technology recognizable in the design of Fun Palace. Moreover, by arguing that new possibilities can be realized only through such experimentations, Ambasz emphasizes the inspirational potentials of social imagination, or in other words, patterns. Indeed, Fun Palace's potential to fuel meditation on architecture has been underlined by various authors. In an exhibition catalogue focusing on visionary architectural projects, Terence Riley defines Price's projects' (along

[53] It should be noted that Tafuri was commissioned to contribute to the exhibition catalogue by Ambasz.

[54] Scott, *Architecture or Techno-Utopia*, 141.

with others such as Archizoom, Superstudio, or Office of Metropolitan Architecture) as roots of contemporary architectural production.[55] In fact, Fun Palace itself has been positioned as a model for the architecture of twenty-first century, in the conference "Fun Palace Berlin 200x" organised by Berlin architects Philipp Oswalt and Philipp Misselwitz.[56]

In brief, Tafuri's exposition of the socioeconomic and political enforcements against architectural practice is particularly enlightening for situating the discussions on patterns into contemporaneous realities. However, in order to figure out the creative potentials of projects (such as Fun Palace), one feels more inclined to follow Ambasz's point on "architecture's ongoing capacity to formulate hypotheses for change,"[57] and adopt Tafuri's insights as precautions against potential ideological traps of socioeconomic and political realities. Thus the focus shifts towards transformation of social imagination into built form, without being altered by present conditions. Consequently, patterns present a course to better understand the complex relations between contemporaneous realities, social imagination, and architectural practice.

2.4 Patterns and Form

Evidently, if social imagination forms one side of the mediation, its counterpart, praxis, forms the other. That is to say, transition from social imagination to praxis brings along the essential case of patterns' role in form production under focus. To begin with, presuppositions regarding utopias' depictions of form and style present a fairly important point for consideration.

It can be argued that form production and imagery had been a rather delicate subject in Price's designs. As pointed out by Rem Koolhaas, even radical groups influenced by Cedric Price's formlessness, such as Archigram, ended up producing shapes.[58] However Price

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[55] Terence Riley, introduction to *The Changing of the Avant-Garde: Visionary Architectural Drawings from the Howard Gilman Collection* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2002), 14.

[56] An evaluation of the conference is available in: Philip Christou, "Making Fun of Buildings," *Building Design*, October 29, 2004, 25, http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=727866861 &sid=1&Fmt= 3&client Id= 37478&RQT=309&VName=PQD (accessed 30 Dec. 2007).

[57] Scott, *Architecture or Techno-Utopia*, 140.

[58] Rem Koolhaas argues "Rogers, Fosters, Archigram, once all dedicated to Cedric's formlessness, now produce 'shapes'[…]". Koolhaas, introduction to *Re:CP*, 8.

decidedly sustains his argument that form should always be generated –if any specific form is ever to be generated– from the requirements of the social actors. Initialized by this motivation, Price's designs place social imagination in the center of focus. From this perspective, it could be suggested that his design priorities display affinity with Ricoeur's constitutive dimension of utopia,[59] which utilizes critical social imagination for meditation on the betterment of the present context. Thus, form is generated (and regenerated when need occurs) according to the input from social actors. Positioning himself free from formalist and stylistic concerns, Price also parallels Coleman's conceptualization of utopian patterns:

> […] my [Coleman's] argument in favour of utopia's relevance for architectural invention is not predicated on either formalist or stylistic preferences; actually, my objective is to reveal the problems with just such modes of evaluation.[60]

This elaborated definition liberates the conception of utopia from formalist and stylistic limitations, as patterns are thematic models that can be carried on in various forms and in no particular style. Keeping in mind the inadequacy of style as a paradigm in understanding the social, cultural and political aspects of architecture,[61] it can be suggested that utopian invention would fairly benefit from being conceptualized as themes rather than styles.[62] Thus it can be argued that patterns are not intended to lead towards specific forms, but rather present referential guidelines that may evolve into any form. Through reconsideration of the social context, patterns critically meditate on the characteristics of present built environment to come up with alternative productions. They are present on the intellectual level, and do

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[59] See: Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

Paul Ricoeur's studies on ideology and utopia provide enlightening insights regarding the utopias' contribution to creative production. Although Riceour does not elaborate on architectural medium directly, his arguments on utopia provide a comprehensible framework for architectural inquiry. Defining the conjunction of ideology and utopia as "social and cultural *imagination*", Ricoeur points out that ideology and utopia both "have a positive and a negative side, a constructive and a destructive role, a constitutive and a pathological dimension."

[60] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 4.

[61] Sarah W. Goldhagen, "Something to Talk About: Modernism, Discourse, Style," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 64, no.2 (June 2005): 144-167.

[62] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 98. For comparing thematic and stylistic approaches, Coleman notes that "Themes are permanent problems of architecture extrinsic to form and outward appearance, whereas style de-emphasizes shared concerns across space and time in favour of what is visually unique. Themes emphasize experience; style emphasizes novel images and assemblages".

not depict any specific form in praxis. In this way, patterns attain a diagrammatic form rather than a literal one:

> The various spatial relations that embody the ideal society have often been literally described in this way: the 'plan' of Sforzinda is less a plan, in the sense of an ideal city plan, than a diagram. […] And, as the late Louis Marin has demonstrated, the complex organization of Thomas Morus' Utopia are *[sic]* revealed most clearly in the diagram, as if they were initially conceived as such. But these are diagrams that describe the symbolism of forms to their roles in society: they do not constitute, literally, the spatial form itself –they are more symbols than icons in Peirce's terms.[63]

Besides sharing a common concern with the operational intention of patterns, it can be suggested that in arguing "architecture had nothing to do with any aesthetic sensibility,"[64] Price is certainly abstaining from formal residues of pathological speculation on utopia. An enlightening example of this stance is the consideration of monumentality and inalterability as utopian characteristics. In his article "Erasing Architecture into the System," Isozaki argues that in presenting radical ideas through architecture, Price "does not necessarily require utopian or monumental constructs but rather proposes lightweight recombinations of disposable components."[65] By positioning utopia –evidently in a conventional sense– and monumentality against disposable lightweight constructions, Isozaki –although unintentionally– resonates with Price's objection that "no one now needs to see the City Hall," when invisible servicing has grown to free itself from boundaries of space.[66] Monumentality, by the very nature of the term, calls for a lasting existence. Analogically, once recognized as an important activity center for the city, the City Hall could have been considered a monument that is recalled in the mind by its built form. When the City Hall looses its significance in individuals' lives, that is, when it fails to adapt to the present conditions, it is emptied of its once claimed meaning. More importantly, in failing to adapt the requirements of the users, the monument will evolve into a burden:

> […] while clothes, motorcars, forms of government, and wives are increasingly becoming objects of limited periods of predilection, we are still prepared to accept buildings and towns, not for the benefit of the user or for

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[63] Anthony Vidler, "Diagrams of Utopia," *Daidalos* 74 (2000): 7.

[64] Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of the Performance," 23. Lobsinger quotes the argument verbalized by Price.

[65] Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System," 25-26.

[66] Price, "Response From the Architects," 288.

> us, but for posterity; and we live in New York or London in spite of the buildings, not because of them.[67]

I.C. Jarvie points out a similar issue in presenting his critical utopianism. Jarvie argues that for architects a danger concerning the future lies in "not building cities to live in, but challenging people to be fit to live in his [architect's] cities."[68] Resonantly, what Price offers, instead of long term planning, is "calculated change,"[69] with no particular goals in physical terms, which is reflected in his design for Fun Palace in a twofold manner. Firstly, Fun Palace is designed to adapt different spatial needs by operations of cranes and prefabricated parts, having "calculated" how it may keep in pace with changing requirements. Secondly, the building has an anticipated life span of ten years, after which the project would be demolished –as it would be subject to the danger of turning into a monument. Price's concern with calculated change, evident in his various achievements,[70] calls into mind Anderson's argument that architect's concern should be inventing possibilities for the future, and that even presenting a point on continuous change is an attitude about the future.

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[67] Ibid., 287.

[68] Jarvie, "Utopian Thinking and the Architect," 15.

[69] Ibid.

[70] On the cover of Cedric Price's book *Re:CP*, orange colored letters in front of a black background read: "Best before 1 May 2006 (by this date the author may have changed his mind)".

CHAPTER 3

POST WORLD-WAR II BRITISH CONTEXT

So far the focus of the discussion has been positioning patterns as a tool for transformation of social imagination into architectural projects. For this purpose, originally emerging from a productive use of utopia, the conception of patterns and their relevance in the case of Fun Palace have been explored. However, in order to be able to identify patterns and their productive potentials in Fun Palace properly, one would also need to consider the context in which Price's architectural ideas had flourished. In fact, a closer survey of the post World War II Britain reveals several connections between contemporaneous context and Price's design ideals. Furthermore, it can be argued that Price's career has been routed by influential acquaintances as well as critical events during his student years and his professional practice.

Price's architectural training and practice corresponds to a remarkably turbulent era of Britain, the effects of which can be considered particularly influential on his approach to design. Being a quite challenging context, the post World War II Britain features a distinguishable set of interconnected social, political and cultural issues, along with the material damage to urban environments. Furthermore, de facto framework of post-war conditions was paralleled by an equally influential impetus in social goals and expectations of the society. As a consequence, architecture became an important tool for responding to the wind of change in the social structure. To render itself capable of the task set ahead, the discipline had to reconsider its own potentials and limitations, utilize its tools and research the most efficient ways to answer the social needs addressed to it.

The influence of the era on Price's conception of architecture can easily be recognized in his positioning of contemporaneous social requirements: "For Price, the 'hardware' of architectural form became secondary to the 'software' of human activity."[71] Furthermore, the influence of zeitgeist is not limited to social concerns, but can also be observed in his ideas towards

[71] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 9.

responding to social needs via architecture, which include various levels of activity ranging from adaptable designs to utilization of technology. Hence, even through a rough consideration of the post-war British milieu and Price's architecture, several connections can be made. For this reason, Fun Palace should not be examined as a disjointed design of its own, but should rather be considered together with the context in which Price's conception of architecture flourished. Keeping that in mind, this part of the study intends to examine the influential characteristics of the contemporaneous context on Price, thus providing a base for identifying patterns' role in the transformation from social imagination to built form.

3.1 Social and Architectural Milieu

World War II and its aftermath have considerably changed Britain's views on the fields of politics, culture and economy. By the end of the war, the society placed hopes on physical and mental reconstruction of its wounds, expecting to trigger a change that would better fit the demands of a 'Welfare State'. This attitude was vividly reflected in the slogan of the Labour government (led by Prime Minister Clement Attlee), "let us face the future". Thus, beginning with the World War II, 1934 born Price witnessed dramatic phases of social change. As Mathews points out, at the age of twelve, Price observed governmental efforts to "reshape Britain into the new social democracy that the public had come to expect, initiating the Welfare State reforms."[72]

A major social change was experienced in the traditional class structure of Britain. During the catastrophic heat of the war, people were motivated with the potential of creating a better state by post-war reconstruction. Subsequently, by the end of the war, there occurred a spirit of equality in experience and in opportunities, which no longer tolerated issues such as class distinction. Instead, the main objective of the nation was achieving equality on various scales, emphasizing on public ownership of industries and public utilities:

> Social equality was a goal for politicians and architects alike. Housing, industrial and power buildings, education, factories and supporting services became the focused and central issues.[73]

If war-time propaganda served to raise the spirits of the society, propaganda after the war served for orientating the nation towards the establishment of the Welfare State. In this new momentum,

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[72] Ibid., 2.

[73] Dennis Sharp, "The New Architecture in Britain: The Framework of the Welfare State," in *Back from Utopia: The Challenge of the Modern Movement*, eds. Hubert-Jan Henket & Hilde Heynen (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2002), 118.

architects (students and practitioners alike) claimed an important role that would fuel the change, the task of "creating the environment in which the new society would flourish."[74] The older slogan of "homes fit for heroes" was replaced by an enthusiasm for 'town planning', not only emphasizing equality but also aiming to raise public interest in the recovery from the damage of the war. Hence, promotional posters and *esquisse* plans (figure 3.1) were produced to build up both professional and non-professional interest (particularly under the stimulus of Arthur Korn, who was one of the architects working on 'Master Plan for London' and a teacher of Price).[75] Stimulated through this stream of action, the clearance of slums and re-planning of the cities introduced a potential engagement for young architects, giving way to many socially committed careers:

> Almost every architect born in the 1920s and early '30s and worth his salt, spent some time working in central or local authorities, often teaching part-time in one or other of the schools of architecture, keeping students up to date but also recruiting the next generation of socially committed architects. In the AA school from 1955-60 about 80% of all schemes designed were for some form of housing.[76]

Hence architecture was assigned with the meditation on how built environments would respond to the changing needs of the new Britain. However, the pre-war prominent groups *Congrés Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM) and its British counterpart Modern Architecture Research Group (MARS) were no longer as radical as they had been before the war. Moreover, they were being increasingly criticized by a group of young architects for "betraying true modernism by making it too easy and therefore dull".[77] Seen in the light of these situations, 'Festival of Britain' (1951) that involved many of the members of the MARS group (and also corresponded to the CIAM congress of the same year), is interpreted as an attempt to flourish hopes and present the ways Modernism can adapt itself to address the requirements of the

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[74] Clive B. Fenton, "PLAN: A Student Journal of Ambition and Anxiety", *Man-Made Future: Planning, Education and Design in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. Iain Boyd Whyte, (Routledge: London and New York, 2007), 174.

[75] For further information, see: Peter J. Larkham, "Selling the Future City", *Man-Made Future: Planning, Education and Design in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. Iain Boyd Whyte, (Routledge: London and New York, 2007).

[76] Sharp, "The New Architecture in Britain," 117.

[77] Alan Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion, 2007), 89. The mentioned young architects would later be called the Independent Group, beginning at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London in 1952.

Welfare State.[78] The festival was considered successful by some for achieving the joyful morale as foreseen, and unsuccessful by others who considered it as a threat to Modern architecture or simply irrelevant with the grim realities of the post-war destruction. Quoting Alan Powers, "The Festival of Britain made its attempt to establish a new architecture of pleasure, and was not unsuccessful, but this was seen as threatening to Modernism's masculinity."[79] Whether a success or a failure, though, the festival can be considered as a particular inspiration for Price.

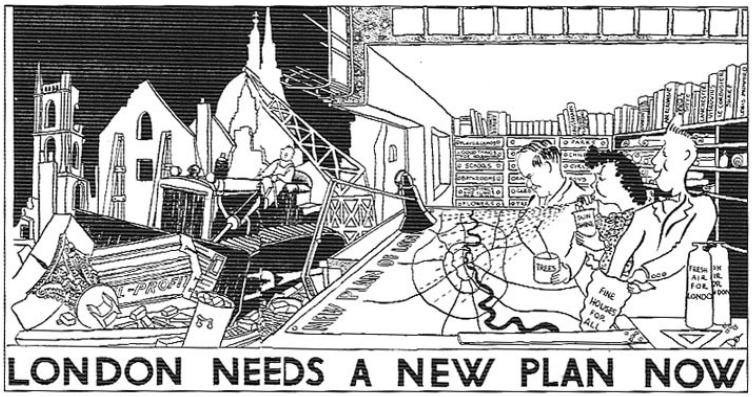

Figure 3.1 London Needs a New Plan Now, 1944. Source: Alan Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion, 2007), 79.

3.2 The 1951 Festival of Britain

The 1951 Festival of Britain was arranged on a previously bombed site, presenting an ironic rejuvenation on ruined land. The festival's main motive was to boost a joyful public spirit that would help the amelioration of war-time damages both mentally and physically. Consonantly, having undertaken the role of reconstruction of the post-war social environment, the architecture of the festival had to encourage and actuate the social program of the organization. Although unable to meet the rapid structural changes of contemporaneous Britain sufficiently, the festival "tempered the harsher aspects of functionalist modern architecture".[80] In a brief sense:

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[78] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 3.

[79] Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History*, 165.

[80] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 2.

> Out of the repertory of pre-war Modernism, a team of architects developed architectural strategies for the exhibition buildings that integrated the work of painters and sculptors, displayed engineering in a playful spirit, using as much bright colour as possible, and creating a general feeling of uplift both literal and metaphysical.[81]

Considering the architectural and social extents to which the festival was presented, it can be considered at least partially influential on the seventeen-year-old Price. Although he would be more affiliated with the young group of architects that have criticized Festival of Britain, still some links may be drawn between Fun Palace's design ideals and the festival objectives. Probably the most evident affinity is revealed between the social programming foreseen by the festival and the program of Fun Palace. The festival's utilization of architecture in order to facilitate a participatory learning and leisure experience is certainly vibrant in Price's Fun Palace. Indeed Powers would describe the vision of the festival with words that one can easily use to define Fun Palace's design goals without any changes:

> It was certainly hoped that visitors would learn new ways to enjoy themselves, with modern design doing what it could to encourage a light heart and an open attitude.[82]

Interestingly, education and productive use of leisure time would be major social issues in the following years, presenting a challenging social context for architects. Therefore festival can be seen as a reference point for the succeeding architectural responses to social issues.[83] A common trait shared by the festival and Fun Palace is the use of technological possibilities for emancipation of space (an approach that Ambasz would later underline in the 1972 Symposium *Universitas*, in which he presented Fun Palace among promising examples). In order to encourage "an open attitude", modern design would have to present room for potential spatial changes, which could be made possible by utilization of technology. Although Fun Palace introduces a much elaborated use of technology compared to that introduced in Festival of Britain, one still inquires whether the architectonic potentials presented in the festival might have played an inspirational role on Price. For instance, the use of steel structures to house independent slabs as observed in Sir Basil Spence's "Sea and Ships Pavilion" might have evoked the idea of interchangeable slabs hung on a structural grid as seen in the design of Fun Palace

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[81] Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History*, 84.

[82] Ibid, 85.

[83] Increasing rates of automation and decline of industry would cause a higher rate of unemployment, less working hours and increased leisure time, which presented a rather important social input by the time Price and Littlewood devised a program for Fun Palace.

(figures 3.2 and 3.3). Moreover, the same examples project a similar design of structural systems (figures 3.4 and 3.5). Approvingly, Price comments on a later interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist:

> I knew of him [Basil Spence] because he did the Sea and Ships Pavillion at the Festival of Britain, which was the first time I ever went to London […] It was the best thing he ever did. It was very good. Made of bits of ships. There was a bow of a huge oil tanker – well, it was huge in those days.[84]

Interestingly, the social arguments of the festival still continue to inspire contemporary designs. A rather striking example is directly related to the festival itself. The 1951 festival was supported by London City Council with the commissioning of a permanent symphonic concert hall (the Festival Hall), the construction of which posed an important challenge regarding the economy of post-war milieu. The building would act as a social center that reified the appreciation of art regardless of the contemporaneous conditions. Hence the Festival Hall would contribute to the joyful and uniting spirit of the festival. That being stated, as Price would later argue via Fun Palace, buildings need to adapt to changes necessitated through changing demands. Importantly, the recent changes made to the Festival Hall to house new functions not only provide an update for the building, but also present the inspirational potentials of the original social intentions of the festival:

> More recently, the Festival Hall has been 'reinvented' as the 'People's Palace', and its ability to include all types of people at all times of day within the capacious foyer spaces understood as part of the original intention, although at first it operated in a more conventional manner.[85]

Whether intentional or coincidental, the reinterpretation of the Festival Hall thus communicates the festival's point on the utilization of architecture for diversification of social imagination. The social impetus can clearly be observed in the renaming of the hall to "People's Palace". The joyful spirit that enabled Fun Palace to devise an open leisure program can therefore be seen piecemeal in earlier examples such as Festival of Britain.

Festival of Britain can thus be conceived of as a utopian elaboration on how the social conditions of Britain could have been improved through architectural intervention. As such, the festival as a whole and the featured installations in particular can be interpreted as patterns devising a method to transform social imagination into built form.

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[84] Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price," in *Re:CP*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 83.

[85] Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History*, 84.

Figure 3.2 Sea and Ships Pavilion, Sir Basil Spence, 1951. Source: Alan Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion, 2007), 84.

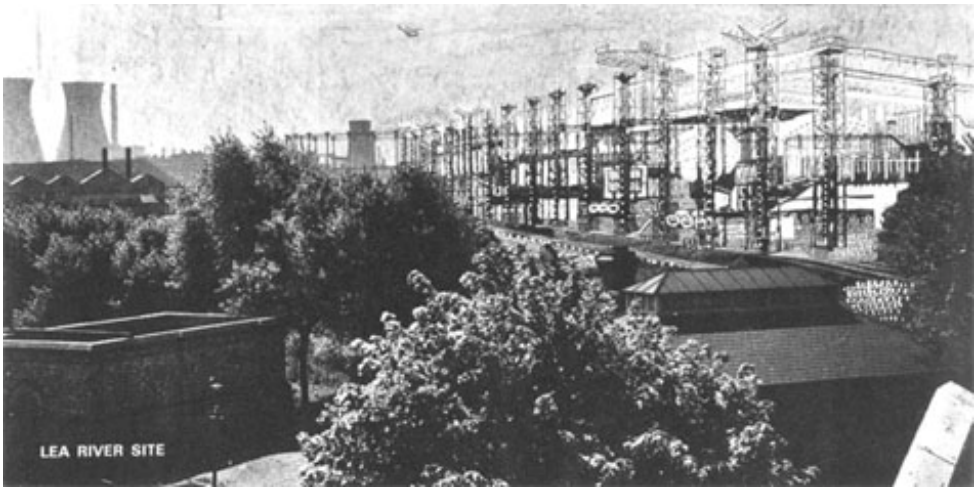

Figure 3.3 Fun Palace on Lea River Valley Site, Cedric Price. Source: Stanley Mathews, "The Fun Palace as Virtual Architecture: Cedric Price and the Practices of Indeterminacy," *Journal of Architectural Education* 59, no. 3 (2006): 41.

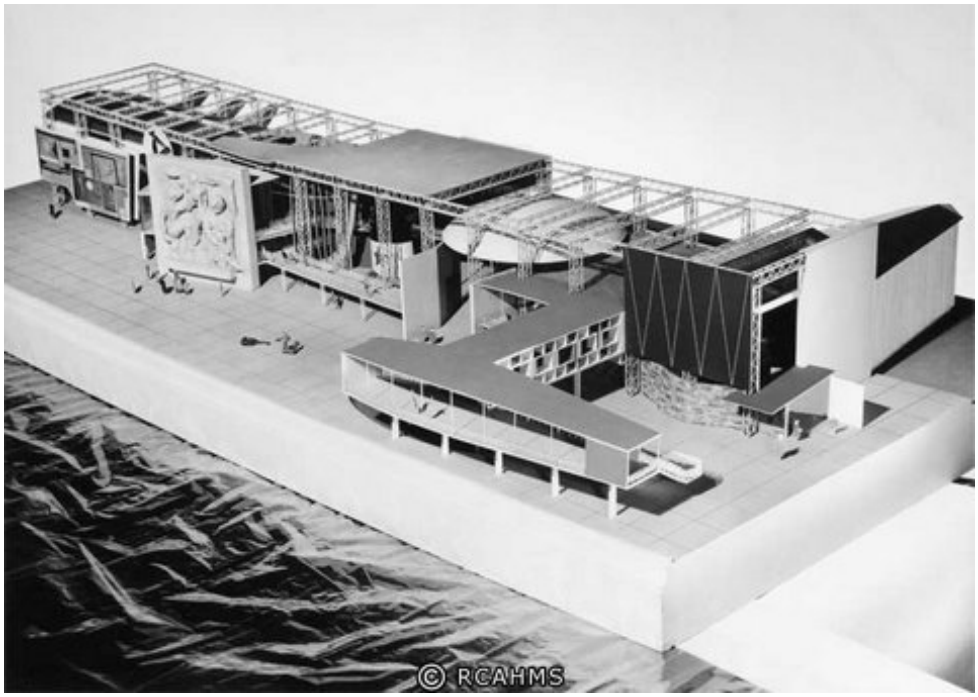

Figure 3.4 Sea and Ships Pavilion, Sir Basil Spence, 1951. Source: "The Life and Work of Sir Basil Spence 1907-76: Architecture, Tradition and Modernity", Arts and Humanities Research Council, Research Project, Warwick Online: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/arthistory/research/basil_spence/images/ (accessed 20 May 2009).

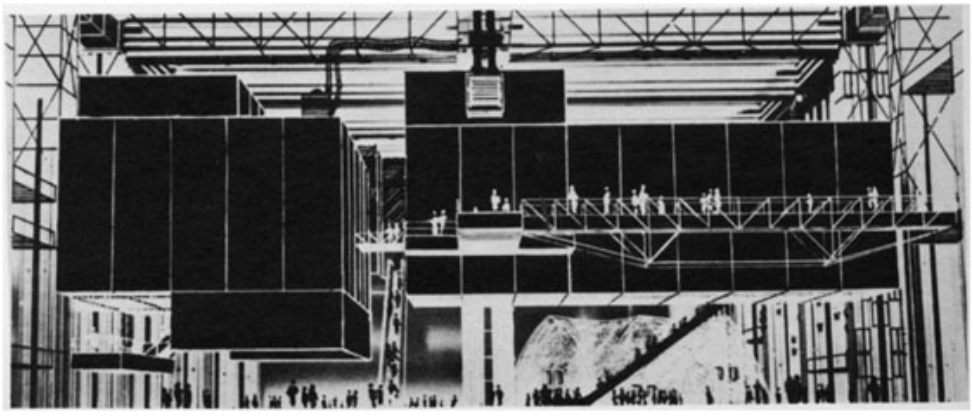

Figure 3.5 Fun Palace sketch, Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood. Source: Cedric Price, *Re:CP*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 33.

3.3 Post "Festival of Britain" Acquaintances

Meanwhile, 1950s witnessed the formation of a group of young architects and artists interested in introducing mass culture into professional practice. The meetings held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) covered a range of "unusual" subjects such as pop music, violence in cinema, American cars, advertising and mass-media.[86] The convention, including influential names from a variety of branches ranging from architecture (such as Alison and Peter Smithson) to experimental photography (such as Nigel Henderson) and occasionally supported by critics such as Reyner Banham, would later be called "the Independent Group". As the name suggests, the Independent Group posed a strong challenge to the institutionalized notions of art and architecture.[87] At a time when British architectural avant-garde were increasingly being drawn to Scandinavian modernism, the Smithsons pointed out to a new direction. Writing about a house design in 1952, they argued for architecture's engagement with reality, and focused on the "poetic relationship between living things and their environment".[88] Their controversial (and award winning) Hunstanton Secondary School Building introduced "raw" use of materials to house functional requirements (figure 3.6). However, although Smithsons would consider their "New Brutalism" as ethic, it would more often be questioned and defined as aesthetic:

> For all its talk of 'an ethic, not aesthetic', Brutalism never quite broke out of the aesthetic frame of reference. For a short period, around 1953-55, it looked as if an 'other architecture' might indeed emerge, entirely free of the professional preconceptions and prejudices that have encrusted architecture since it became 'an art'.[89]

It can be seen that although sharing a common interest in the relation between the living and the built environment, Price would differ from Smithsons in his approach to architectural form. In fact, Price's self-defined "anti-architecture" is closer to Banham's point that architects who see the restrictions of architectural tradition would follow "any other discipline that enables them to tangle with the 'realities of the situation', in a less inhibited manner."[90] Being radical himself

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[86] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 10.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History*, 99.

[89] Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1966), 134.

[90] Ibid.

with forms and comprehension of pop culture mediation, Peter Smithson would still not tolerate Price's conception of formlessness. Mathews quotes from his interview with Smithson that he describes Price as "a gentleman who can't design."[91]

Figure 3.6 Hunstanton Secondary School, Alison and Peter Smithson, 1949-54. Source: Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1966), 34.

In the milieu of the "New Brutalist" current, the AA student Price found himself closer to Ernö Goldfinger, who was eminently knowledgeable on prefabrication in architecture. Being fascinated with Goldfinger's innovative work with prefabrication,[92] Price still objected that prefabrication be utilized so as to allow portability in time and space, whereas Goldfinger believed that such a quality could lead to fashion trends in architecture (and thus degrade the focus to a question of style), similar to automobiles. However, in time Goldfinger's conception of architecture would be considerably influential on Price:

> Gradually, Goldfinger began to temper his insistence on permanence, recognizing that although the basic framework of a building might be fixed, the programmatic uses and subdivisions required a greater degree of flexibility.[93]

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[91] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 29.

[92] Cedric Price's father, Arthur Price, also worked as an architect and Price's first acquaintance with Goldfinger's work had been via the book titled *The Modern House in England* by FRS Yorke, which his father encouraged him to study.

[93] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 29.

In fact, Goldfinger's approach can be considered significantly consonant with the programmatic approach in Fun Palace. In Matthews' words, "Price had begun to view architecture more as process than as form" through Goldfinger's articulations on time and change.[94] The consonance can also be extended over construction methods foreseen by both architects. It is remarkable that in 1950, Goldfinger proposed the construction of two schools using a mobile crane that was used to assemble individual walls. About a decade later, Price would also devise mobile cranes to render his Fun Palace capable of providing spatial changes.

Besides his affiliation with Goldfinger, Price also worked in the office of Denys Lasdun, and taught part-time at the Architectural Association (AA) in the decade following the Festival of Britain. As already mentioned, much of the contemporaneous academic discourse was based on creating solutions to meet the demands of reconstruction, providing the necessary context to flourish architectural conception. In other words, the post-war conditions in part provided an open milieu for testing possible proposals. Considering this information, it can be suggested that Price's professional practice with Lasdun might also have played an important role in his apprehension of social issues and implementation of technological availabilities:

> The Lasdun office's experiments in housing, institutional and educational work set them in the forefront of new developments, particularly in the use of concrete and its new aesthetic possibilities.[95]

Although criticized for not functioning as foreseen, Lasdun's proposals (such as designing open walkways in between housing flats to stimulate social association) contain bold design decisions that might have been at least partially influential on Price's uncompromising attitude.

Contrary to the practices of Lasdun (and many other practitioners of the time), however, Price believed that the architect should be concerned with the problem of housing continuous change, avoiding monumental and unchangeable construction. From this perspective, a series of activities launched during 1950s by ICA are considerably important for understanding Price's reification of design ideas. Among these were mostly exhibitions and lectures focusing on the efficient use of machines, game theory and improvisation, and cybernetics, all of which would later be vividly utilized in Fun Palace project. However, even more remarkable than these activities, the 1956 exhibition titled "This is Tomorrow" holds a special place in the early career of Price.

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[94] Ibid., 30.

[95] Sharp, "The New Architecture in Britain," 119.

3.4 "This is Tomorrow"

> Acting as almost a counterblast to the precepts of the Festival [of Britain] the exhibition 'This is Tomorrow' held in the Whitechapel Art Gallery in August-September 1956 created much interest. Set in an East End workers' district of London that was far from the fashionable galleries and design schools of Bloomsbury, the AA and the Slade… [i]ts main aim... was to create 'a symbiotic art/architecture' in which collaboration was founded on 'antagonism rather than medieval cooperation'. Thus it was a complete change of position from the unifying and sympathetic nature of the Festival of Britain five years earlier.[96]

"This is Tomorrow" exhibition presented the variety of interests and approaches within the Independent Group. The striking collage on the exhibition poster by Richard Hamilton (titled "Just What is it that Makes Today's Homes so Different, so Appealing?") reflected a pastiche of different and unrelated pop culture items, summarizing the essence of the exhibition (figure 3.7).

Goldfinger asked Price to participate in the construction of their (the group included Victor Pasmore and Helen Philips) contribution to the exhibition. The design, probably one of the closest in the exhibition to Price's ideas, introduced square modules that displayed a relief by Pasmore and a sculpture by Phillips. Even more important than his participation in the exhibition, Price had the opportunity to meet people whose thoughts were harmonious with his. Eventually, these acquaintances would lead to the intellectual impetus and practical solutions introduced in Fun Palace.

One of the influential contacts Price made during the exhibition was Frank Newby,[97] a promising young engineer. Becoming better-known after his appreciated work in Skylon Tower (figure 3.8) in the Festival of Britain, Newby would share Price's idea of utilizing technology to serve changing needs. Moreover, as Newby was readily experienced in the technological solutions (that Price was continuously growing fond of), he would also contribute to Price's conception of design. Their acquaintance at the exhibition soon turned into a lifelong collaboration, which made the detailed production of the Fun Palace project possible.

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[96] Ibid., 123.

[97] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 33.

Figure 3.7 Exhibition poster titled "Just What is it that Makes Today's Homes so Different, so Appealing?", Richard Hamilton, 1956. Source: Alan Powers, Britain: Modern Architectures in History (London: Reaktion, 2007), 106.

Figure 3.8 Skylon, Frank Newby (Felix Samuely Ltd.), Festival of Britain, 1951. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 32.

Another significant aspect of "This is Tomorrow" for Price was his acquaintance with the architecture critic Reyner Banham. Having met occasionally at the ICA lectures, and at "This is Tomorrow", the two found out that they shared a common interest in the potentials projected by technological advance. Both believed that contemporaneous modern architecture limited its technological references to visual qualities only, and ignored the potentials of innovation through technology. In other words, although there were vast potentials made available by the advances in technology, architects chose to use only the image of the machine. Price and Banham believed that technology housed vast potentials to address the social dynamism of the changing Britain, whereas "Machine Aesthetic", limited only to the "looks of the machine" caused an antithetical relation between architecture and technology. In the conclusion of his *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, Banham criticizes designers and theorists of the First Machine Age for they,

> […] produced a Machine Age architecture only in the sense that its monuments were built in a Machine Age, and expressed an attitude to machinery–in the sense that one might stand on French soil and discuss French politics, and still be speaking English.[98]

Hence it would be seen that Price's enthusiasm in proper utilization of technology for the reification of social imagination in architecture at least partially owes to significant influences and acquaintances of the context's intellectual milieu. By the time Price was ready to begin his own practice, he had already fitted himself in a productive debating intellectual context, which played a significant role for ripening his ideas. It was not by chance that Banham would thank to familiar names such as Ernö Goldfinger and Arthur Korn, and comment that they "made it possible and necessary" to write *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*.

According to Price, architect's role should be to utilize the availabilities to provide space for social participation, in his own words, "gaps of uncertainty". Consequently, while commenting on the role of architecture in the twenty first century, Price would validate Banham's argument that the architect has to give up with cultural and traditional labels attached to him, "including the professional garments by which he is recognized as an architect"[99]

> What do we have architecture for? It's a way of imposing order or establishing a belief, and that is the cause of religion to some extent.

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[98] Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1980), 329.

[99] Ibid.

> Architecture doesn't need those roles anymore; it doesn't need mental imperialism […] Creating a continuous dialogue with each other is very interesting; it might be the only reason for architecture, that's the point.[100]

It is significant that Banham and Price's point on the need for change in the practice of architecture is still relevant almost half a century later. Their shared objective remains a yet un-reached nevertheless motivating goal (which is defined through patterns in this study) for architects practicing in the contemporary context. However, it should be kept in mind that patterns would be relevant in architectural practice as long as they address user needs and contextual realities.

3.5 Social Unrest: Education and Leisure

Price and Banham's points were becoming increasingly valid for the post-war context, and have provided invaluable feedback for the design of Fun Palace. Matthews would describe their interest in technology-architecture compromise timely for it was at a time when "established British industries struggled to adapt to new technologies, market conditions and foreign competition."[101] Although Britain was in a better condition than it had been during war time, on various fields, especially including education and industry, the country was lagging behind other industrialized countries. There were major changes in the structure of labor and economy, as heavy industries were in decline and no longer in pace with rivals in foreign countries. The newly granted independence of British colonies impeded the flow of cheap materials and marketing of products. Heavy industries mostly migrated to other developed countries. Although this period can now be comprehended as a transition to automation, British governments continuously made investments to keep the old industries alive.

The noted decline in British industry is a remarkable input for the design of Fun Palace from the dimensions of production and social life. Regarding production, Price's view on advancing possibilities manifested itself in designing Fun Palace as a "kit of parts". This approach noticeably reflects Banham's point on adopting "the logic of the machine". By using prefabricated modules to form an ever-changing structure, Fun Palace emphasized the increasing importance of innovation in automation and production. Moreover,

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[100] Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price", 57.

[101] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 11.

changes in the industrial condition constituted a significant impact on social life. The two cycles (production and social life) were connected mainly via labor as the mediating factor. To be more specific, transition to automation was being interpreted as less people working, and shorter work hours for those who work:

> Britain was struggling to keep pace in an increasingly competitive world market. Redundancy, factory closures, and automation meant that fewer people would be employed, and those who had jobs would work shorter hours. As the need for unskilled labour decreased sharply, it was clear that new kinds of workers would be needed in the future - more intellectually agile, and able to learn new and as yet unforeseen skills.[102]

Lower employment rates and lesser work hours in turn raised debates about leisure time and education. Advances in technology were significantly altering the conceptions of work and leisure, between which, Price argued, a division was no longer acceptable.[103] In the article titled "The Fun Palace," Price and Littlewood argued that people from all income levels would "quite soon be able to live as only a few people now can: choosing their own congenial work, doing as little of it as they like, and filling their leisure with whatever delights them".[104]

Consequently, the quality of leisure time became more of a concern for politicians and educators. Efforts were spent on their account to impose positive use of leisure time (such as reading or jogging) instead of alcoholism or gambling. Moreover, the governmental efforts targeted liberation on a range of different fields. Among the various reforms made by the socialist government, which include abolition of capital punishment and theatre censorship, one of special significance was revision of education. Although limited by the inadequacy of budget, the socialist government lead by Harold Wilson envisaged presenting opportunities for people from all class backgrounds, trying to depart education policy from the traditional manner of gentlemanly learning. Through liberation of educational opportunities, it was hoped that education would become available to all and thus encourage more efficient use of developing scientific processes. In fact, the reforms on education were considerably consonant with the problems laid out

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[102] Stanley Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative* Research 3, no.2 (2005): 76, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=18346584&site=ehost-live (accessed 30 December 2007).

[103] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 129.

[104] Ibid., 127-134.

by psychiatrist Morris Carstairs, who would join the brain-team of Fun Palace a few years later:

> In his 1962 BBC Reith Lectures, psychiatrist Morris Carstairs warned that British society was ill-prepared to deal with the pace and scale of change facing the nation. He believed that in particular, the British educational system had failed to 'equip the ordinary man with the wish, or the ability, to go on learning for himself,' and to safeguard the mental health of the nation, he called for dramatic increases in the variety and the availability of educational and self-improvement opportunities.[105]

Thus it can be seen that there was an emerging uneasiness and demand in the culture for a change in education. As mentioned, decreasing work hours and increasing unemployment made it necessary not only to raise an educated worker class, but also to devise proper ways of spending leisure time. Apparently, as Price and Littlewood would point out that orthodox architectural practice had been inadequate to provide proper space for the new demands. They sarcastically noted that the city worked "in a constipated way, in spite of its physical and architectural limitations."[106] Therefore, it can be argued that the impact of liberalization proposed a new challenge for architecture; that of designing the space for leisure:

> In 1964, *The Listener* commented that a renewed public interest in planning was of a piece with 'the passing of Puritanism and of what has come to be called, with pride or horror, the new morality'. Perhaps, it speculated, a culture more at ease with its physical self would be reflected in an improved public realm, made for enjoyment.[107]

Indeed by the mid 1960s, increasing leisure time had become an important input for many architecture critics, theoreticians and practicing architects. However, few of the proposals intended to go beyond the conventional interpretations of an architectural program for leisure, being limited to building types such as sports facilities or movie theaters. Those who attained a radical attitude were ultimately rejected, such as Mike Webb's (a member of the Archigram group) proposal for an entertainment center (referred as Sin Centre) sharing at least partially the spirit of Fun Palace (figure 3.9). Hence, in light of the social unrest and the changing conditions in Britain during the 1960s, it can be seen that Fun Palace of Price and Littlewood was profoundly relevant in its social programming, and abundantly courageous in its manifestation.

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[105] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 3.

[106] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 129.

[107] Powers, *Britain: Modern Architectures in History*, 165.

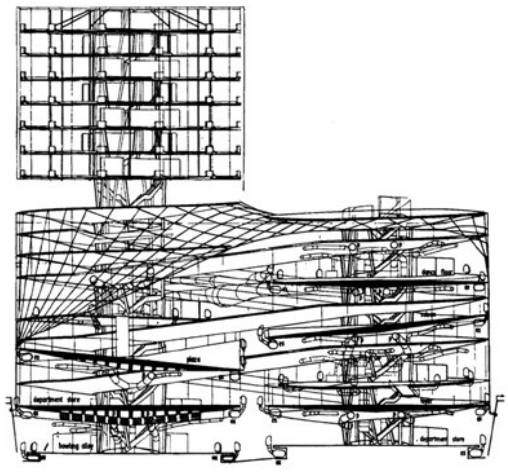

Figure 3.9 Section of Entertainments Centre (Sin Centre), Mike Webb, 1959-1961. Source: Stanley Matthews, "Cedric Price – From 'Brain Drain' to the 'Knowledge Economy'", http://www.audacity.org/SM-26-11-07-03.htm (accessed 12 December 2008).

CHAPTER 4

FUN PALACE AND PATTERNS

In the preceding chapter, the social context that initiated the idea of a Fun Palace has been briefly discussed. Referring back to the discussion on utopia and patterns (second chapter), and the information on the project context (third chapter), this chapter of the thesis examines how Price and Littlewood's critical social imagination operates the design process of the Fun Palace. Patterns (as conceptualized in the second chapter) will be utilized to inquire into the design processes of the flexible program variations and physical structure systems of Fun Palace. Prior to these discussions however, it may prove beneficial to remind how patterns might be utilized as guides in the design process.

4.1 Patterns as Guides

It would be convenient at this point to remind how patterns are relevant in the course of this study, and how their use may enhance the understanding of the design process of Fun Palace. It has been mentioned earlier in this thesis that the definition of patterns emerges from an elaborated definition of utopia, provided by Nathaniel Coleman. In the introduction to his book *Utopias and Architecture*, Coleman provisionally defines his conception of utopia as a set of intellectual guidelines, which are intended to conduct practice:

> [U]topias articulate possibilities intended to clarify work toward their realization under existing conditions. So defined, a utopia is a clarifying model that suggests the kinds of conduct that might lead to its eventual fulfillment.[108]

Coleman seeks to establish a constitutive use for utopian imagination on actual practice. For this task, he argues, utopia must be emancipated from its supposed negative connotations, which form the pathologic dimension of utopia (borrowing the term from Paul Ricoeur).

[108] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 24.

Consonantly, unlike the pathologic dimension of utopia, the constitutive dimension harnesses creative potentials with a critical approach. That is, while retaining utopia's mental value as rethinking on present inadequacies, Coleman also aims to retain utopia's connection with real practices. In this sense, the present realities are taken as an input for devising renewed conditions. Constitutive utopias "…are established in terms of current conditions but are highly critical of them".[109] If applied to an architectural design process, utopian imagination thus hints at the "liminal space" between existing conditions and renewed ones. To be specific, observing the existing conditions, utopian imagination can be utilized as a critical thinking mechanism, which guides the design process towards the achievement of providing alternative perspectives.

In mentioning the negative connotations of utopia, Coleman argues that many postulations do not necessarily belong to the conception. Considering the context of this thesis, the most essential among these postulations is the supposed-imperativeness of utopias, which can be seen directly contrasting with the architecture of Fun Palace (i.e. the improvisational social program of the project). Coleman makes the point that utopian constructs should be seen as guidelines rather than abiding unalterable orders. Therefore, while being intended towards actual practice, the intellectual system devised through utopian imagination should enforce neither total nor exact realization. He argues that the conception of utopia "…turns mean, pathological, when the model of a superior situation, which it puts forward, *must* be fully realized".[110] For this reason, the devised systems provide only guidelines, which can be practiced partially, tested, and altered.

Consequently, Coleman utilizes "patterns" as guidelines of intellectual processes, which bear the link between the theoretical and the practical. Concordantly, in this thesis, patterns provide the link between social imagination and Fun Palace. To be more specific, patterns pave the way to study the social transformative potentials of Fun Palace via the critical argumentative characteristic inherent to utopias. Thus, the social enthusiasm and excitement observed in the design process of Fun Palace can be re-examined as references to learn from.

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[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid., 2.

Basically, patterns are modifiable structural frames, which provide mental references to guide design processes. As they define the multifaceted liminal phase between the existing and the renewed conditions, patterns can be ascribed theoretical, analytical, and operational functions. They are theoretical tools for they can be utilized to express the mental design phase. As theoretical tools, patterns define the various relationships between design factors (such as social context, time, etc.) and the processes in which they are utilized. They are analytical tools to examine and chart these relationships and to test their validity. They also are operational tools, for they present guidelines, which the architect can return and refer to for running an efficient and thoroughly considered design process.

Paralleling the elaborated definition of utopia, patterns indicate the presence of social concerns as the activating input for design. They stem from a unity of cultural, political, social and tectonic concerns, the relationships between which can be formulated and reformulated in infinite ways. Patterns' creative potential relies on avoiding interpretation of these relations as exact prescriptions. In fact, on quite the contrary, patterns are hypothetical by their very nature as intellectual constructs. They are meant to be put to test for validity, and are open to modifications if needed. Hence analytical use of patterns acts as a feedback mechanism; similar to the cybernetic programming of Fun Palace. It can be seen that such conceptualization of patterns turns them into alterable guidelines. Furthermore, patterns do not require exact or total practice, as they are intellectual guidelines. Thus a design process understood via patterns can guide towards possibilities of projects with various contexts, programs, and requirements. Consonantly, the same argument can be made for the Fun Palace project, the intellectual background of which can be observed on many later projects such as Potteries Thinkbelt (1965), Generator (1976), or Inter-Action Centre (1977) of Cedric Price, to name a few.

It is seen that patterns occupy the in-between design phase (i.e. "liminal space") of a generic design process, but they also are strictly related to the project context for receiving input, and to the resulting processes for guiding practice and testing validity. The project input is derived from existing conditions, which trigger a need for devising alternatives. The design phase of the Fun Palace project, as examined in detail in the subsequent discussions, features a radical social program that is devised in light of interpretations of the design input, and a relevant interdisciplinary proposal. The social setup of the project is devised under supervision of a team of professionals from different disciplines providing scientific input as well as know-how information. In accordance, the architectural setting for the social setup is worked in the scale of

production details (ranging from structural calculations to estimation of building time) to keep in pace with the social program. Finally, the design product, Fun Palace, is an enhanced social activity environment that presents a hypothetical alternative to the existing conditions. The project design features a cybernetic feedback mechanism that would alter the overall configuration of the building according to information on user behavior, in a sense testing the validity of the ongoing programs. By these means, the design process is constantly in relation with its resultant output.

Considering these aspects, it can be seen that Fun Palace itself works similar to patterns. It emphasizes ideas and production, and does not enforce any specific end product (and instead argues for continuity of evolving processes). For the reasons mentioned, studying Fun Palace via patterns promises a harmonious yet alternative examination of the project's social dimension. In the following discussions, patterns are employed to inquire into the socially liberating architectural program and its non-disabling architecture, and how the proposals might have addressed the existing realities of the project context.

4.2 Designing a "Non-Program"

> Collective meaning, if the word can be used in this context, was to be deciphered from within a dynamically interactive field of communication. To this end the Fun Palace was to be an environment that would both *anticipate and accommodate change*.[111]

The social context and the critical vision behind Fun Palace render *change* as a critical keyword. As Lobsinger remarks, the aim of the Fun Palace project is to produce "an environment that would both anticipate and accommodate change". Concordantly, Price's approach towards architecture is observed to appreciate change and utilize its potentials. From this point, it is not surprising that Price reserves a particular spot for *change* in his article titled "73 snacks". The article can be briefly defined as a set of random intellectual exercises on various issues, ranging from conceptions such as "time" to "40s and early 50s list of favorite things". Consequently, Price's notes on the section titled "change" are noticeably accordant with his design concerns in the Fun Palace project:

> To enable a CHANGE of mind to be socially beneficial, PRE-DIGESTED WISDOM must be constantly cleansed of previous solutions while retaining the MEMORY OF DELIGHT.

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[111] Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of the Performance," 24. Emphasis added.

> ARCHITECTURE often ignores its role of MAKING A PLACE WITH A PURPOSE.
>
> The possession of a mobile telephone is as useful as an abacus in a rocking boat – neither has a usage for a wrong number.
>
> Libraries are a socially beneficial distorter of TIME and LOCATION enabling OBSERVATION and REFLECTION AT WILL to the INDIVIDUAL. [112]

It must be noted that the article itself is intended to stimulate mental activity in the reader,[113] much alike the participatory program proposal for Fun Palace. The four points introduced by Price are particularly remarkable for they shed light on the design phase of Fun Palace. To be more specific, each point helps founding connections with social context and project objectives if considered more in-depth individually. For this reason, Price's points on change provide a mind refreshing introduction for re-thinking on Fun Palace program:

> To enable a CHANGE of mind to be socially beneficial, PRE-DIGESTED WISDOM must be constantly cleansed of previous solutions while retaining the MEMORY OF DELIGHT. [114]

In light of the aforementioned social upheaval in post-war Britain, Fun Palace obviously intends to "enable a change of mind". To begin with, the program foresees a change in the structure of the society. Price and Littlewood confidently list some of the constituents of the change as "increase in wealth, increasing personal mobility, flexibility of labor and decreasing essential social interdependence".[115] Coherently, Fun Palace embodies the argument that the change in the social structure has to be addressed outside the borders of architectural convention. The mental dexterity of everyday social experience should be coupled at the same pace by alternative social programs. In other words, "pre-digested wisdom must be cleansed of previous solutions". No apparent solution should be enforced to last longer than its legitimate life-time, as changes in social experience may render any permanent condition irrelevant. Mathews underlines the fact that Fun Palace was declared by *The Sunday Times* as the most important design idea of 1964. He adds that the reason for this choice was Fun Palace's proposal of responding rapidly to the

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[112] Cedric Price, "73 Snacks," in *Re:Cp*, ed. Cedric Price and Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), under "07: Change". Emphasis original.

It must be noted that page numbering is purposefully abandoned in this section of the book. Instead of page numbers, individual titles are numbered as in the form "07: Change".

[113] Price comments that he hopes the book would be devoured by the reader, as if it was a snack.

[114] Price, "73 Snacks," under "07: Change". Emphasis original.

[115] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 129.

environmental change.[116] The task at hand in Fun Palace is designing a program that can continuously produce new possibilities. In other words, the program should be designed so as to manifest itself as a "non-program" (as Littlewood describes).[117]

Yet, Price argues, "the memory of delight" is to be preserved. The memory of delight is the "Fun" of the "Palace". It is the stimulation of self-learning through enjoyment. It is personal by its very nature: it places the protagonist at the core of the design. Thus it reflects pure experience and self expression through enjoyment. In Brechtian sense (who has inspired and influenced Littlewood remarkably), effective communication with the audience can be achieved only by involving the audience in the enjoyment of the activity. Correspondingly, Fun Palace aims to stimulate communication (which Price defines as the only excuse for architecture[118]) by memories of delight.

> ARCHITECTURE often ignores its role of MAKING A PLACE WITH A PURPOSE.[119]

Following the initial argument, the second remark of Price on change is "architecture's role of making a place with a purpose". While addressing the social aspects of architecture, this argument finds one of its most evident reifications in Fun Palace. Quoting Mary Louise Lobsinger, "The production of the social and the individual – both physically and virtually – in real-time is the theoretical crux of the Fun Palace." [120] As the "production of the social and the individual" takes place in the "real-time", it inevitably proposes a *change*, from the existing to the experimented. Therefore, it can be argued that making a place with a purpose is at the very heart of designing a radical social program, especially one as liberating as Fun Palace. In this sense, *the purpose* is the most significant legitimization of the program's radical arguments, which in turn intend to address the *change* in social experience.

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[116] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 141.

[117] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 132. The term "Non-Program" is used by Joan Littlewood for Fun Palace program in the mentioned article.

[118] Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price," in *Re:Cp*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 57. Price argues: "...as you are speaking about the beginning of the twenty-first century, dialogue might be the only excuse for architecture."

[119] Price, "73 Snacks," under "07: Change". Emphasis original.

[120] Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance," 128.

> The possession of a mobile telephone is as useful as an abacus in a rocking boat – neither has a usage for a wrong number.[121]

The third point satirically portrays the uselessness of possession without proper know-how. This remark can specifically be read as hinting on the application of the design. Applying the argument to architecture, this point illustrates the necessity of using present availabilities for practical purposes, be it technology, psychology, or any other potential design tool. Practicing in a milieu of continuous *change* in experience and future possibilities, the architect is responsible from understanding the potentials of his/her operational tools. That is, s/he must employ the right tools to the right ends. Analogically, if an architect is to use a mobile telephone, s/he is obliged to understand that s/he has to know the right number. Moreover, the child riding the rocking boat (which would symbolize the user) must be told a number that s/he can understand, so that s/he can count it on the abacus. It is therefore seen that the architect has to understand the *change*, and consider its potentials in his/her designs. To this end, s/he should make best use of present availabilities so as to go beyond their "image" and reach their true inner "logic".

> Libraries are a socially beneficial distorter of TIME and LOCATION enabling OBSERVATION and REFLECTION AT WILL to the INDIVIDUAL. [122]

The final remark brings forward new keywords that are in tune with the emancipating program idea of Fun Palace. Price defines the library as a space of change. That is, in the process of experiencing the program of the library, one encounters an inevitable change of conditions and perceptions. The library provides multiple experiences of "time and location" in one social space. Fun Palace, too, provides multiple experiences of time and location in one social space. Library conveys experience through "observation and reflection", and these actions are decided by the "individual". Placing emphasis on the individual, Fun Palace program foresees the participation of users to decide their own experiences. Taking these similarities under consideration, it can be suggested that Fun Palace is *a library of social experiences* (i.e. the program).

The debate over libraries and social experience also founds a connection between Fun Palace and Price and Littlewood's earlier reference of 18th century traditional parks of Britain. Mathews argues that London's public pleasure gardens such as Vauxhall and Ranelagh had been important references for program design of Fun Palace.[123] Designed

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[121] Price, "73 Snacks," under "07: Change".

[122] Ibid. Emphasis original.

[123] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space,* 72.

and run for public education and leisure of the working class, these gardens introduced diverse programs such as music halls, follies, or pleasure domes. Littlewood mentioned that Fun Palace sought to maintain the essential pleasure of these parks: "the pleasure of strolling casually, looking in at on or another of these areas or (if this is preferred) settling down for several hours of work-play."[124] Hence, just as the ongoing activities in the park are initiated by individuals, so are the experiences at the library, and Fun Palace. Furthermore, just like the historical reference, Fun Palace emphasizes observation and individual action. Taken this way, it can be seen that the conception of libraries hint at the relation between the public pleasure gardens and the program of Fun Palace.

At this point, it might be beneficial to remark the reasons for re-consideration of change as Price defines it. The introductory discussion on change is necessary for thinking on Fun Palace program for two main reasons. Firstly, it has been explained that Price and Littlewood consider their social context as one that necessitates and stirs change. Sarah Williams Goldhagen remarks that interpretation of the social upheaval as change is an important characteristic of Price and other "negative critic"[125] colleagues:

> They accept as cultural facts that theirs was a society that could not unthinkingly revert to traditional ways of life, that theirs was *a culture of innovation and change*.[126]

Moreover, the interpretation of the social context as one of innovation and change is not limited to mere observation. On the contrary, the room for spontaneity in experience and pleasure (as observed in the context) constitute a major objective for the program design of Fun Palace. An introductory article for Fun Palace enthusiastically claims the objective that:

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[124] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 130.

[125] Sarah Williams Goldhagen, "Coda", in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, eds. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 316.

Goldhagen defines "negative critics" as reformists (listing architects and philosophers such as Bernard Rudofsky, Constant Nieuwenhuys, Guy Debord, and Price) who were perturbed by social phenomena such as "mass consumption, the International Style, real and perceived erosions of personal autonomy – they were more exclusively preoccupied with personal freedom and self-revelation."

[126] Ibid., 317. Emphasis added.

> The organization of space and the objects occupying it should, on the one hand, *challenge* the participants' mental and physical dexterity and, on the other, allow for a flow of space and time in which passive and active pleasure is *provoked*.[127]

The concern with the mental dexterity and mobility of the times (i.e. the pace of change) can be observed even in scratched-out sketches for public announcement of the project. A preliminary study for a promotional poster encourages the reader to think on what will be changed in his/her life "5 years from now". Strikingly, the suggested answers include "visiting the moon", or "making Moscow in twenty minutes" (figure 4.1). Although they might seem absurd at the first instance, such exercise is important for it fosters imagination and promotes self-expression. Both mental and physical participation as such triggers self-expression and new experiences. Overall, this stream of thought appreciates *change* and utilizes it in service of a *purpose*. This point of view corresponds to Price's apprehension of *the purpose of architecture*:

> It [architecture] must create new appetites, new hungers – not solve problems; architecture is too slow to solve problems.[128]

Following Price's point of view, the matter of interest is seen to be designing a program that enables continuous change. This central design concern manifests itself perhaps most vividly in the public introduction manuals of Fun Palace. Price and Littlewood often introduce their program as "laboratory of fun", "laboratory of pleasure"[129], or "university of the streets".[130] Furthermore, the architectural structure of Fun Palace is expressed via terms such as "short-life Toy", "kit of parts", or "short-term plaything". A trait common to all of these titles is the unconventional assemblage of unattached conceptions. To be more specific, "laboratory of fun" attaches an unconditional leisure state (fun) to a strictly controlled testing environment (laboratory). Even more importantly, this and the other assemblages bear strong references to the contemporaneous social issues such as the work-leisure separation. Approvingly, Lobsinger mentions the case, noting:

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[127] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 132. Emphasis added.

[128] Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price," 57.

[129] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace".

[130] Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price," 57.

> Reiterated in the Fun Palace briefs is a soft leftist critique arguing that the disciplinary regime of time is dictated by a market-place that artificially divides a worker's life into work-time and leisure-time, a regimentation of time that is materially enforced through the zoning of work and leisure in urban space.[131]

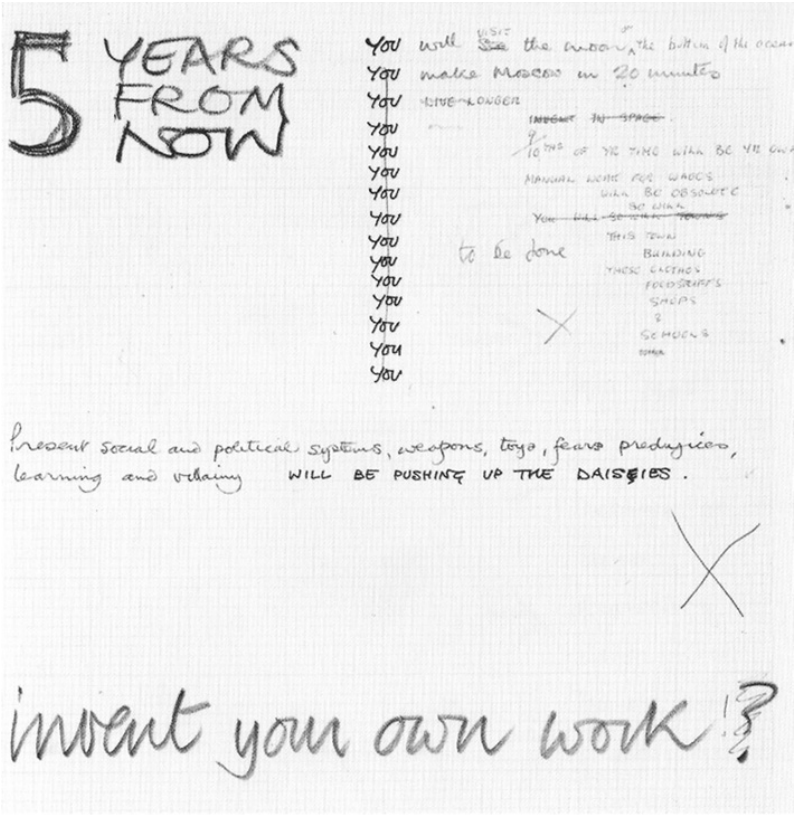

Figure 4.1 Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, Draft of Promotional Literature, 1963. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 86.

Having tracked the course of social critique in the design concerns, an important question is raised in mind: how does this critique constitute the program design? The title "laboratory of fun" appears to be a promising start for this line of inquiry. It is seen that the bringing together of laboratory and fun produces a new relation between the two concepts. That is to say, the

[131] Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance," 128.

conventional boundaries between laboratory and fun (i.e. between work and leisure) are consciously blurred to produce a third conception. This third conception, the assemblage (as in "laboratory of fun"), challenges the perception of its constituent contents. It criticizes the relation between the constituents so as to form the flexibility required for alternative experiences. If conceived as a *pattern*, this process can also be tracked in the program definition of the project. Littlewood's aim of abandoning the boundaries between the actor and the spectator is known to have influenced the program design, hence the title "Laboratory of Fun".[132] Consequently, Sarah W. Goldhagen and Réjean Legault define Fun Palace as "an ongoing theater of spontaneous self expression: boundaries between consumption, public display, and private reflection would collapse".[133] Thus it can be seen that design concerns regarding the program correspond to the blurring of boundaries observed in the title. In other words, the pattern that guides the design of the title also provides guidelines for program design.

4.2.1 Pattern: Blurring Boundaries

The contribution of patterns to this argument is forming a framework for meditation. Conceptualizing the blurring of boundaries as a pattern provides a medium to understand the transformation from social concerns to design ideas. Beginning with the titles and promotional literature of Fun Palace, it is seen that assemblages of near-antonyms challenge the perception of the readers (i.e. potential users of Fun Palace). Furthermore, these assemblages originate from the social critique of contemporaneous issues (to remind Lobsinger's remark). Combining these two points, the pattern challenges conventional perceptions (oppressed by social and political factors) through assemblage of near-antonyms (laboratory-fun, work-leisure, love-hate, etc.). Encouragingly, the challenge of blurring boundaries is vibrant in the promotional literature produced by Price and Littlewood. One such promotional draft (figure 4.2) explicitly provokes the readers to rethink on presuppositions about everyday experience. In the title, bold capitals read "DO YOU SUFFER FROM", immediately followed by a list of conceptions presenting near-antonyms (success - failure, education - no-education, etc).

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[132] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 59.

Mathews notes that "In all her productions, Littlewood's purpose was to create a sense of immediacy and to bridge the distance between auditorium and stage."

[133] Goldhagen and Legault, "Introduction: Critical Themes of Postwar Modernism," 17.

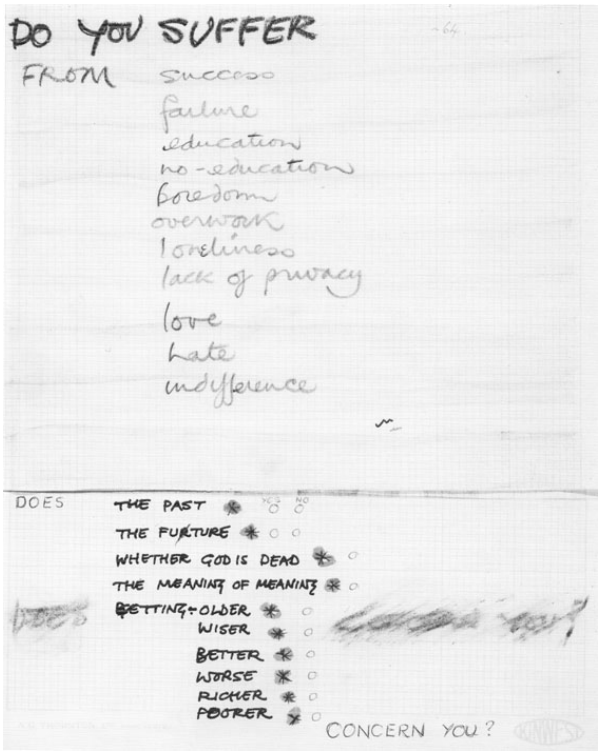

Figure 4.2 Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, Draft of Promotional Literature for Fun Palace, 1963. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 115.

It can be seen that the bringing together of near-antonym conceptions encourages one to question the boundaries between them. This particular point helps understanding the program design from various aspects. By challenging strong presuppositions through opposition, one forms a system to observe pre-supposed mental boundaries. In turn, the system makes possible the distortion of these presuppositions in order to produce alternative conditions. This process is considerably parallel to Price's arguments on the nature of architecture:

> A [architecture] is that which through self-conscious and unnatural means of distortion achieves socially beneficial conditions hitherto thought impossible.[134]

[134] Price, "73 Snacks," under "23: A for architecture in 4 not so easy lessons".

Blurring the boundaries helps understanding the present conditions, which leads to "self-consciousness". Furthermore, it provokes "self-conscious and unnatural means of distortion" by challenging conventional perceptions. In turn, the inferences made from these challenges help proposing programs that are able to go beyond the contemporaneous realities "hitherto thought impossible". That is to say, blurring boundaries makes possible the observation of pre-supposed program relations from a more flexible view, hence contributes to alternative program proposals.

At this point, it might be beneficial to consider the "blurring boundaries" pattern via examples. Assemblages forming the pattern can spring from various sources. For the sake of clarity, these sources will be studied under interconnected categories. Considering Fun Palace project, one can identify at least three sample categories. The first is social milieu, as it is the main motive for designing Fun Palace. The input from social milieu can be exemplified by such assemblages as work-leisure, upper class-worker class, or education-fun. The second category can provisionally be called as personal experience. This category is based on Price and Littlewood's emphasis on the individuals' role in the program. This second category addresses the experience and participation of the users, such as boredom-overwork, success-failure or love-hate. The third category is based on the experience of physical space. This category may present itself in various forms, such as experience of time in space (as in the summer-winter example), observation of different forms of space. Hence, it is seen that blurring of boundaries occurs simultaneously at various phases (figure 4.3).

Through each individual assemblage, the relations between the presupposed oppositions are questioned. By questioning their relations (and boundaries), one acquires an in-between space in which the constituents dissolve into each other. To recall, it has been argued earlier that in the title "Laboratory of Fun", the assemblage of laboratory and fun had produced a conception that is more sophisticated than simple coexistence of both. Thus, by dissolving boundaries, one obtains a new condition that is more flexible in character than the simple coexistence of its constituents. For instance, blurring the boundaries between work and leisure results in an in-between space where the definitions of work or leisure are not limited to convention. Thus, this new condition promises flexibility that goes beyond conventional associations such as leisure at work (such as coffee-breaks) or working at leisure time. Rather, by blurring their boundaries, it is seen that the two concepts need not be taken as

separate inputs; on the contrary they can exist side-by-side without boundaries, in order to form new kinds of experiences (as hinted in the term "work-play")[135].

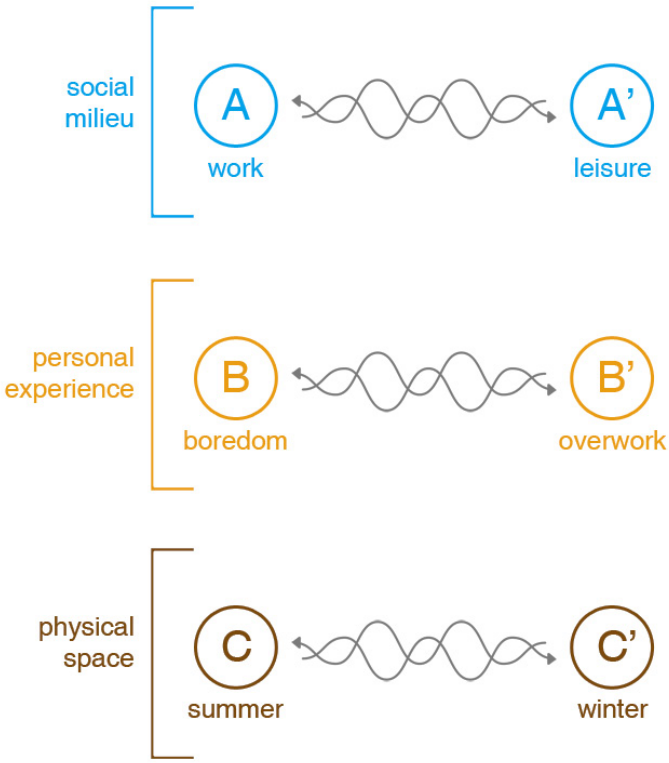

Figure 4.3 Blurring Boundaries: Examples of Near-Antonym Assemblages. Produced by the author.

As individual assemblages are diagrammed together, a second interaction is observed between various -provisional- categories. It has been argued that the blurring of boundaries between two concepts (so far work-leisure assemblage had been the example) produces an in between space unlike that of simple coexistence. In turn, the in-between space makes possible the formulation of new programs. Similarly, one can also consider blurring of boundaries between various assemblages. As the boundaries between individual conceptions are blurred, there also exist cross-relations between different activities as well as their near-

[135] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 130. The term "work-play" is used by Price and Littlewood in an article explaining the flexibility of Fun Palace non-program.

antonyms (figure 4.4). Thus, all of the provisional categories form an in between space, in which "the boundaries between public display and private reflection collapse".

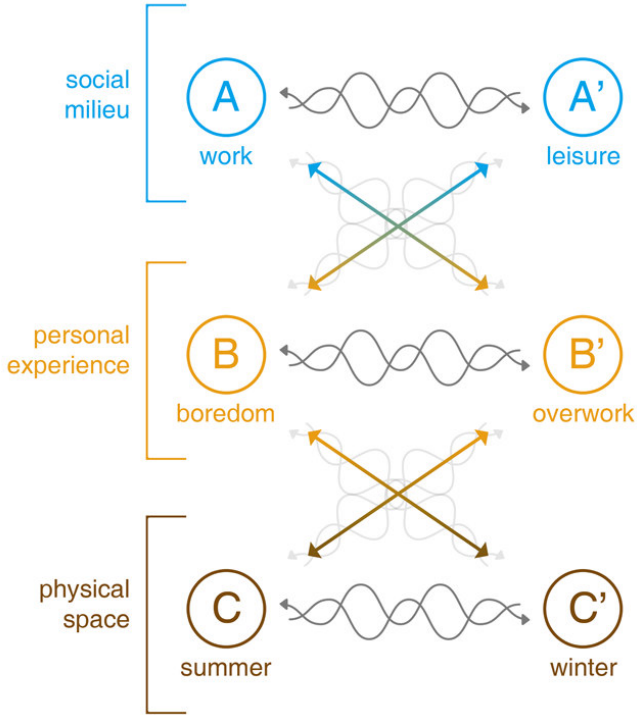

Figure 4.4 Blurring Boundaries: Interrelations of Near-Antonym Assemblages. Produced by the author.

The observed interrelations in turn constitute what Price terms "gaps of uncertainty".[136] To remind Price's view, architecture should provide "gaps of uncertainty" for users to participate in.[137] In a context with blurred boundaries, users' perceptions are challenged at various levels. Presuppositions raised in the socio-political milieu, presuppositions about oneself, or about the perception of time and space are all subject to reconsideration. Thus users are *provoked to participate at will in gaps of uncertainty* (figure 4.5).

[136] Price, "The Invisible Sandwich," 13.

[137] Gaps of uncertainty (and other arguments for the freedom of self expression and experience) show similarities with the arguments of the Situationist International. It is known that Price and Littlewood shared common artistic and political milieus with the situationists, and were friends with situationist artists such as Alexander Trocchi.

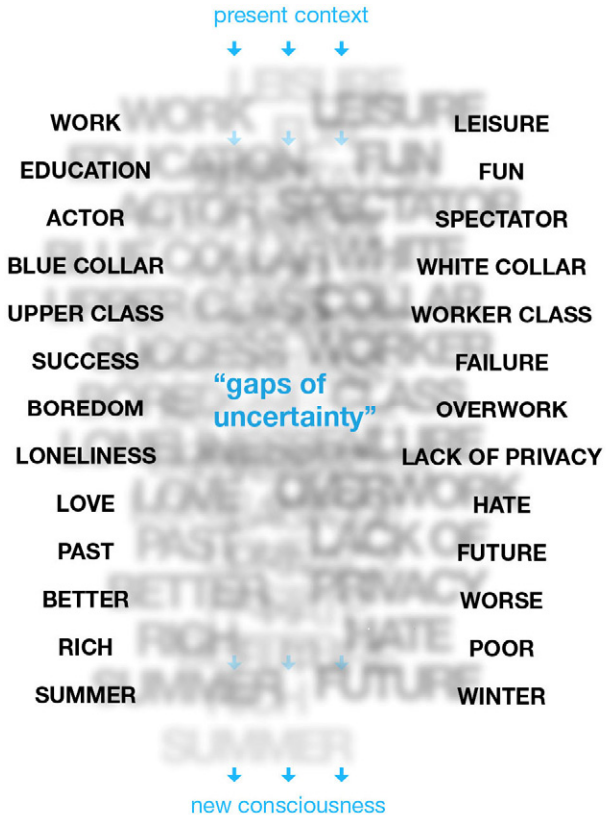

Figure 4.5 Blurring Boundaries: Gaps of Uncertainty. Produced by the author.

Gaps of uncertainty provide guidelines for the design process on the accounts of both designers and users. On designers' account, gaps of uncertainty are produced through distortion of the present conditions. For this reason, they maintain the validity of the design in relation to contemporaneous demand. Furthermore, gaps of uncertainty render the flexibility of program legible; therefore they constitute designers' understanding of the diversity of potential functions. In turn, comprehension of the requirement for flexibility and diversity guides the design process towards alternative program proposals.

On users' account, gaps of uncertainty are to be comprehended through experience of the program. Owing to the flexibility acquired through these gaps, experience can be conducted in several ways. That is, experience can be conducted by engaging in creative activity, or simply by

observing without active participation. This approach can also be seen in promotional literature for Fun Palace:

> Look around – take a lift, a ramp, an escalator to wherever or whatever looks interesting… CHOOSE what you want to do – or watch someone else doing it.[138]

By liberating the individual in the program as such, gaps of uncertainty serve as a medium of *communication* with the self and the others. Hence, one can observe how blurring boundaries contributes to the social critique of the program: by providing an environment of self-expression where people communicate via theatrical modes of experience "…not as audience, but as players and active participants in a drama of self-discovery".[139] Communication enabled by blurring boundaries serves as a collective environment of self-development, while at the same time providing a medium for raising consciousness through social interaction:

> …men and women from factories, shops, and offices, bored with their daily routine, will be able to re-enact incidents from their own experience in burlesque and mime and gossip, so that they no longer accept passively whatever happens to them but wake to a critical awareness of reality, act out their subconscious fears and taboos, and perhaps are stimulated to social research.[140]

As has been mentioned, the examples illustrated for the pattern are provisional. They are part of an "incompleteness" that enables users to devise alternative uses of program for developing new experiences.[141] Therefore, subjects of "blurring boundaries" pattern should be considered as an incomplete list constantly under modification, just like the program itself.

4.2.2 Pattern: Processing the Activities

Keeping in mind the former discussions, one expects to find a different program in Fun Palace than a conventional architectural program. Whereas a conventional program requires delicately detailed definitions for functional requirements, the Fun Palace program has to give up with any sense of limitation by definition. With diversity and flexibility at the focus, the program has to be

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[138] Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System," 30-31.

[139] Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," 76.

[140] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 130.

[141] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 68.

Mathews quotes Price stating that "… in their incompleteness the place will leave to people themselves the possibility of developing new experiences for themselves."

able to embed ever-changing functions. Moreover, the flexibility and diversity within the program has to be coupled by architectural form. Therefore it can be seen that program interpretation in Fun Palace has to go beyond conventional functional requirement listing. Still, the program possibilities of Fun Palace can be examined through a survey of lists and the blurring of boundaries. In this respect, the lists are conceived rather as guidelines than as requirements.

Listing activities for "fun" is not an unfamiliar idea for Price or Littlewood. As the head of the project committee, Littlewood is known to have been "…adding to the list of delights this century owed us…"[142] since her childhood. What Littlewood had then called the list of delights the century owed us, in fact can be interpreted as meditation on the newly acquired potentials of a constantly developing context. Similarly, in "73 Snacks", Price notes down "40s and early 50s list of favourite things" (figure 4.6). The list includes various items, ranging from mass produced good such as cars or pens to "Meltis Newberry fruits", with the common denominator being enjoyment.[143] Hence it is seen that the designers are familiar with (and probably fond of) listing sources of enjoyment. So far, the listing of activities might seem akin to listing functional requirements in a conventional program. Importantly, what makes Price and Littlewood's lists different from conventional ones is not simply their content, but instead the way the lists are utilized.

In the case of Fun Palace, the list of possible activities is expected to be a continuous work-in-progress. That is to say, the program has to be able to recondition and diversify itself according to potential change. A list, by nature, brings forward articles, which can easily turn into limitations if taken as standard requirements. Concordantly, comprehending list articles as such might result in over-specialized spatial formations, which would have been inconsistent with the target of flexibility in program and architectural form. Therefore it is seen that for Fun Palace program to be consistent in itself, list of possibilities cannot be considered as limiting options. Rather, they must arise from and dissolve into *gaps of uncertainty*. For this reason they must denote processes, and not products, echoing Price's argument: "Process, not Product, is the call I hear."[144]

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[142] Littlewood, *Joan's Book*, 640.

[143] Price, "73 Snacks," under "68: 40s and Early 50s List of Favourite Things".

[144] Ibid., under "25: Cities: Replacement or Scrapping".

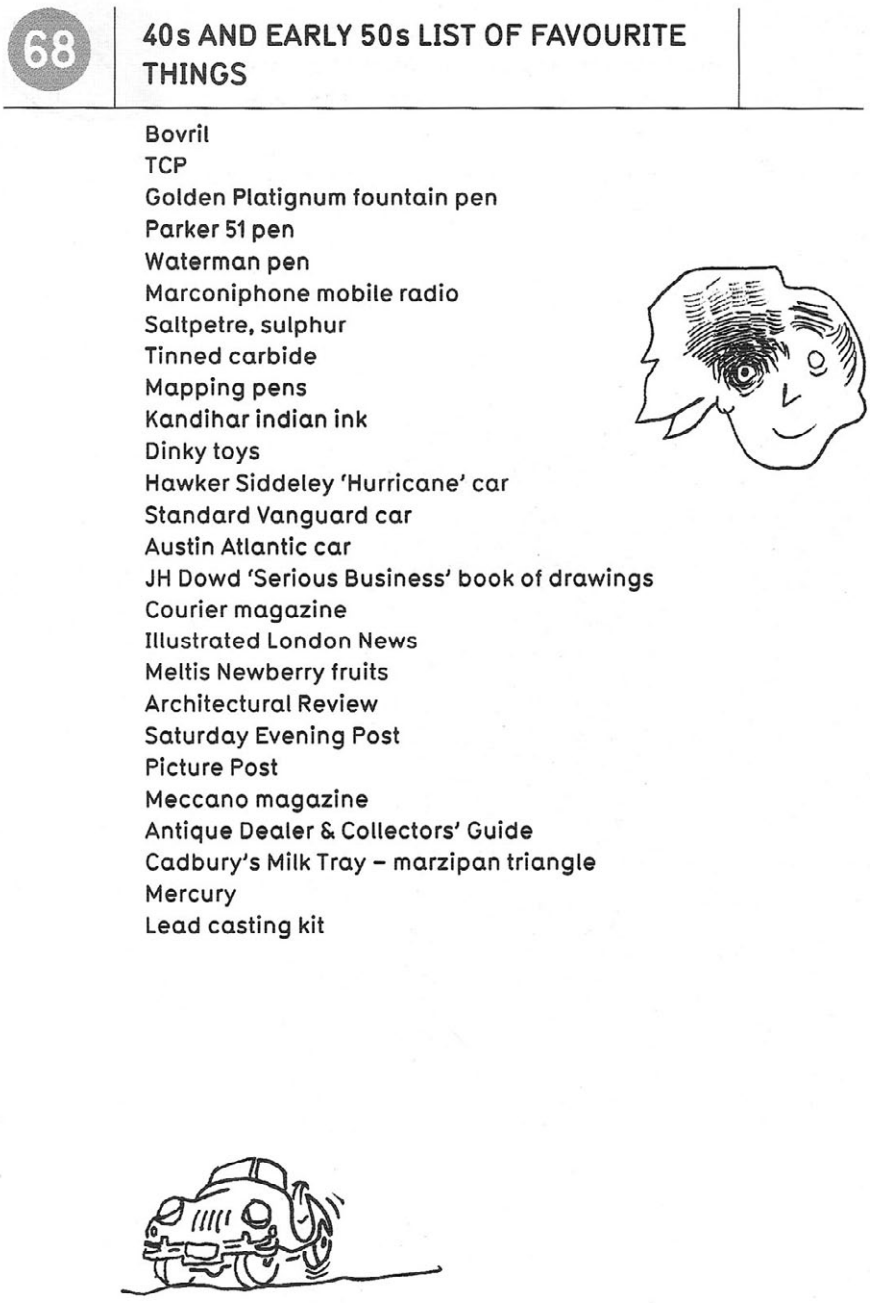

Figure 4.6 Cedric Price, "40s and Early 50s List of Favourite Things". Source: Cedric Price, "73 Snacks," in *Re:CP*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), under "68: 40s and Early 50s List of Favourite Things".

Comprehending individual activities within the context of gaps of uncertainty, one observes that they may have undergone an adaptation of blurring the boundaries. The program of Fun Palace is an ongoing process that enables change. Hence, instead of a static process with a specific output, the program can be interpreted as a *pattern* that facilitates continuous *processing of activities* to produce new possibilities. To these ends, activities listed (in such lists as Price's or Littlewood's) would have to be stripped down into their most basic needs, blurring their definitional boundaries, and reformulating fresh probabilities in the newly-formed gaps of uncertainty. While benefiting fairly from the contextual references of blurring boundaries exercise, such interpretation also ensures the consistency of the program in reference to the goals discussed in the preceding part. This stream of thought commences with Littlewood's notes in an article describing the Fun Palace program:

> (Throughout, the shortcomings of using, by name, activities already in existence was realized.) Therefore the next stage consisted of breaking down a wide range of desirable activities into their constituent demands. The resulting activity affinity information was then rehabilitated by a developed structural, component, and servicing kit. The final store of such possibilities was handed over to the cyberneticians … to be investigated at an early stage.[145]

To begin with, Littlewood mentions the inadequacy of using "activities already in existence". The already existent activities are exercised in the present context, thus reflect the conventions and perceptions belonging to this context. In order to devise new activities, one thus has to go beyond the existing references while retaining their core factor of human delight. Hence, a process similar to the contextual blurring of boundaries is observed. To be able to facilitate production of alternative processes, the activities must be analyzed for their basic demands. By considering these "constituent demands" as the base of the program, it becomes possible to formulate various specialized functions, which may share common constituents but utilize them to different ends.

The case can be more clearly expressed over examples. In order to break down the activities into their constituent demands, one has to consider blurring of the definitional boundaries of activities. For this task, one has to begin with activities to break-down. Along with the lists of Price and Littlewood, the questionnaire circulated by Fun Palace Cybernetics Subcommittee provides the required kind of input for the project. The questionnaire asks participants about what kind of activities they envisage in Fun Palace. The answers cover a diversity of activities:

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[145] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 132.

> Eating, ski practice, drinking, bowling, go-karting, dancing, music concerts, resting, country dancing, swimming, photography, restoration of vintage cars, voice patterns, finger painting, mutual admiration (requires pocket mirrors), "do you mind?" (sex), drama and operatics, archery, son et lumiére[146]

The lists thus provide the knowledge of activity tendencies within the present context. By blurring the definitional boundaries of individual activities, one can reconsider what makes the activities desirable, how the activity might challenge mental and physical dexterity, and how the experience is conducted through space and time. Subsequently, proposal of music concerts can be broken down into base constituents of performance, listening, etc. and relevant spatial possibilities. Breaking down various activities as such provides the designers with what Littlewood calls "activity affinity information". In turn, activity affinity information makes possible the consideration of various "constituents" together to enable alternative programs such as "the maze of silence" or "the tactful tango teacher", which appear in the list of activities for Fun Palace prepared in light of the questionnaire by Fun Palace Ideas Group.[147] Furthermore, activity affinity information conveys a step towards actual practice of the theoretical formation, as it helps clustering and defining common structural needs of the activities (which is discussed in detail later in the section regarding zoning).

Subsequently, the proposals for new activities are considered within the matrix of possibility in terms of practice, and rehabilitated accordingly. As an ongoing process of program design, the activities are then included in the circuit as new activities to break-down, which may inspire further yet fresher ones. The Fun Palace Cybernetics Subcommittee had foreseen that activities designed via this system were to be constantly observed for feedback. Various parameters such as the visiting patterns or the temporal validity of the activities were to be continuously tested by this way. Spatial and organizational configurations would be kept under control so as to prevent disabling the initiation of other activities. In Littlewood's words:

> Once satisfactory feedback was achieved then previous hunches on, say, the desirable periods of transformation from one total configuration to another could be tested.[148]

Hence, at least two patterns can be identified for reconsidering the program organization of Fun Palace. It must be stated once more that these patterns should be considered as connected ways of

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[146] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 114.

[147] Ibid., 114. The activities are bulleted in "A List of 70 Projects for a Fun-Palace".

[148] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 132.

thinking, which feed from and facilitate each other. They also are utilized for founding the connection between the contemporaneous context and the project design. The subsequent discussions consider the program together with its tectonic counterpart. Nevertheless, the patterns suggested in the following parts too should be considered in relation with the patterns studied so far.

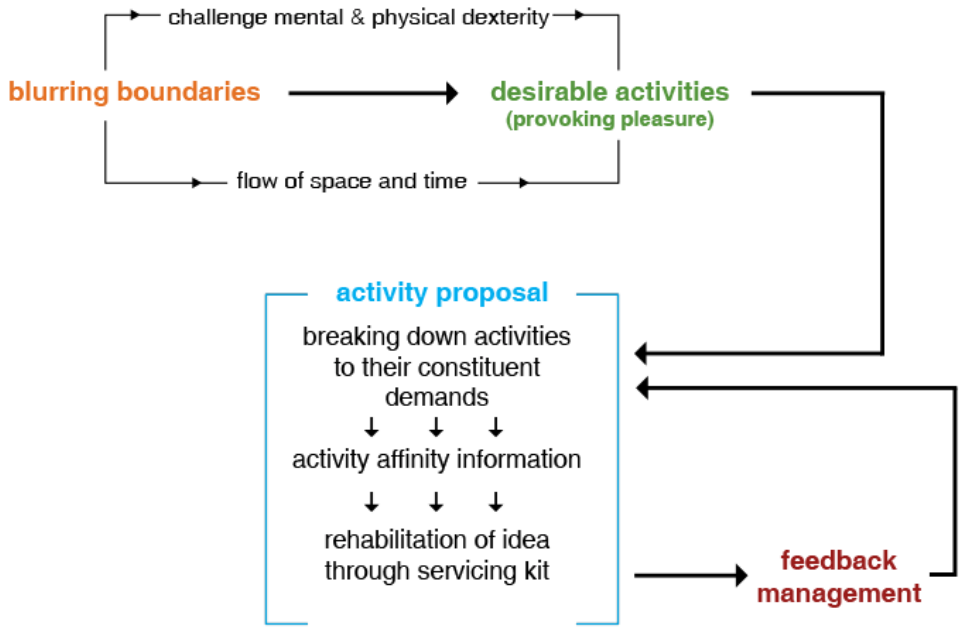

Figure 4.7 Pattern: Processing the Activities. Produced by the author.

4.3 "Non-Program" and "Non-Plan"

The focus of the arguments has so far been the interpretation of contemporaneous context and the transformation of these interpretations into design ideas. It has been mentioned that the project seeks a "non-program" that breaks up with the limitations of conventional thinking. Instead, the "non-program" suggests a continuous process of alternative experiences. Hence, experiences of the participants, their relations with time, space, their contribution to further new experiences are all at the focus of the design:

> Price recognizes as an inextricable part of each movement flow: the fundamental aspects of the perceptions, the observations, the sensory experiences, the responses of the participants, both as individuals and as

> various social groups. Information on how these reactions change in time, their diversity in time, the modulations or minor variations of seasonality, of intensity of flow contribute to the consequent pleasure, delight, learning, sense of security, safety, sanctuary, friendliness, doubt, or frustration, that are critical components in the design process of these futures.[149]

Theoretical elaborations on "non-program" are considered to constitute a great deal to the discussions on Fun Palace. Of equal importance, however, is the design of the "kit of parts" that would enable the "non-program" to function without sacrificing its value as critique. That is to say, the "kit of parts" has to keep up with the alternative approach propounded in the program. The idea of architecture (or rather, non-architecture) capable of providing room for such flexibility in expression is observed vividly in the article "Non-Plan: An Experiment in Freedom", written by Price along with Reyner Banham, Paul Barker, Peter Hall. Non-plan appears relevant for the case of Fun Palace for it very briefly expresses the idea that "…it is very difficult to decide what is best for *other* people".[150] In light of Barker's explanation, it can be argued that the architecture to accompany the non-program should embody this brief essence of non-plan.

In the following parts of the study, while continuing the discussion regarding design of the program, the focus is shifted on the relations between program and practice. In other words, the approach towards practicability is also incorporated in the arguments on the theoretical structure of the program.

4.3.1 Pattern: Kit of Programs

> The resulting activity affinity information was then rehabilitated by a developed structural, component, and servicing kit. The final store of such possibilities was handed over to the cyberneticians […] to be investigated at an early stage.[151]

Recalling Littlewood's explanation once more, it is seen that the steps following the breaking down of activities into constituent demands yield "activity affinity

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[149] Robertson Ward Jr., "Cedric Price: Projects '84-'02," in *Cedric Price Opera*, ed. Samantha Hardingham (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2003), 31.

[150] Paul Barker, "Thinking the Unthinkable," in *Non-Plan: Essays on Freedom, Participation and Change in Modern Architecture and Urbanism,* eds. Jonathan Hughes and Simon Sadler (Boston: Architectural Press, 2000), 7. Emphasis original.

[151] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 132.

information". This information is then "rehabilitated by a developed structural, component, and servicing kit". Although the process is cleverly briefed in one sentence, it is seen that the explanation corresponds to a significant stage in the design of the project: the stage in which the ideas are brought within reach of practical availabilities.

It has been argued that the diversity of possibilities within gaps of uncertainty requires considerable degree of flexibility in program. It is therefore quite a challenging task to reflect the diverse programmatic possibilities onto practice. What Littlewood defines as "a developed structural, component, and servicing kit" in this sense is a complex coordination of program organization and architectural structure. It forms the mechanism where theoretical background is interpreted and utilized for guiding actual practice. That is to say, the various program possibilities are converted into a practical system so that various activity needs can be answered when need occurs.

> Infinite flexibility is a delusion, inapplicable flexibility is exorbitant, achieving an adequate flexibility can generate great economic and social value. Price's work has consistently demonstrated his keen awareness of the value of this quest.[152]

Consequently, the lists of suggested activities for Fun Palace were *processed* for practicability. "While the Ideas Committee generated these quasi-Situationist scenarios [list of activities], the Cybernetics Subcommittee was charged with making them happen."[153] For this purpose, the Cybernetics Subcommittee divided program possibilities into six *organizational zones*.[154] What renders these zones different from conditional clustering is that they correspond to adjacent program possibilities, but in no way depict any physical zone. Therefore, while hinting probable program configurations, the organizational zoning does not denote spatial limitations. Consequently, the titles of the zones (as they appear on draft of Fun Palace booklet) indicate *processes rather than spaces*:

> ZONE 1: Teaching Machines
>
> ZONE 2: Participation in New Forms of Expression

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[152] Ward, "Cedric Price: Projects '84-'02," 31.

[153] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 116.

[154] Ibid., 275-76.

ZONE 3: Films and Lectures

ZONE 4: Scientific Experiments

ZONE 5: Painting, Sculpture, Etc.

ZONE 6: Music

The first zone, titled "teaching machines", gathers the functions, which constitute the "university of streets". Referred as the "fun arcade" by Price and Littlewood,[155] the zone covers educational "games" that would enhance the capacity for observation, deduction and memory of the user. Sample activities offered as examples include learning machines (such as puzzle picture observations) or unedited live television feed cast from various daily experiences (such as coal mines, zoos, emergency rooms).

The second zone is named "participation in new forms of expression". This zone intends to realize Littlewood's conception of a theatre that would blur the boundaries between actor and spectator. For instance, a sample activity proposal suggests that people theatrically present their daily conflicts, such as workplace conditions. During this activity, actors become spectators as well, for they can reinterpret their experiences through simulation. Moreover, the spectators become actors as well, for they have the opportunity to directly involve in the activity or comment. Through communications and interchange as such, the zone is considered as one of social experiments that would have raised consciousness of the users.

The third zone is reserved for films and lectures, which would embody the kinds of processes that would provoke users into making their own media productions. A sample activity emerging mostly from this zone foresees providing people with cameras to film anything they like. The products of the event are then to be displayed. Both the production, and the display activities possesses the potential for initiating communication.

The fourth zone covers scientific experiments. Just as the space becomes a showcase for new technologies, it can also challenge the users to participate in experiments. A fifth zone houses activities related to production and display of art forms such as painting and

[155] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 130.

sculpture. Although it seems closer to conventional leisure conception, sample activity proposals such as "the gallery of coloured vistas" or "try your hand at Japanese paper-folding" indicate that interactions with other zones can be considerably productive. The sixth zone is reserved for hearing and music production activities, which also can function in collaboration with other zones.

It must be remarked at this point that the zones suggested by the Cybernetics Subcommittee were intended to compile programmatic possibilities in a way that they can be systematically arranged and rearranged in a comprehensible system. The possibilities of arrangement and rearrangement in this system can be illustrated by the analogy of a Rubik's cube. The Rubik's Cube is a mechanical three dimensional puzzle invented by sculpture and professor of architecture Ernő Rubik in 1974. Although the original aim is to group squares of the same color on the same faces, in the scrambled form the cube forms a unity composed of various colors. The scrambled unity of the cube and the possibilities of rearrangement on its surfaces are comparable to the organizational zones and their programmatic configurations in Fun Palace (figure 4.8).

It must be remarked that the organizational zones are purely programmatic, and like the program possibilities, they too should not be confined to boundaries. Instead, the zones of activities would facilitate and inspire new activities by interaction. In this respect, the zones provide *gaps of uncertainty* necessitated by program variability. Although they seem to be clustering activity types, they are rather intended to group the constituent demands of blurred activity definitions. The constituent demands freed from the perceptional limitations of convention are then made available for interaction with other activities, and other zones. Needless to mention, the lists of sample processes for respective zones do not represent finished products, but rather are ongoing processes subject to *change*. In the draft of a brochure for Fun Palace, the Cybernetics Subcommittee had noted that:

> The variety of activities cannot be completely forecast; as new techniques and ideas arise they will be tired. The structures themselves will be capable of changes, renewal and destruction […] The place is a constantly changing experiment in which the old human categories are forgotten […].[156]

[156] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 275-76.

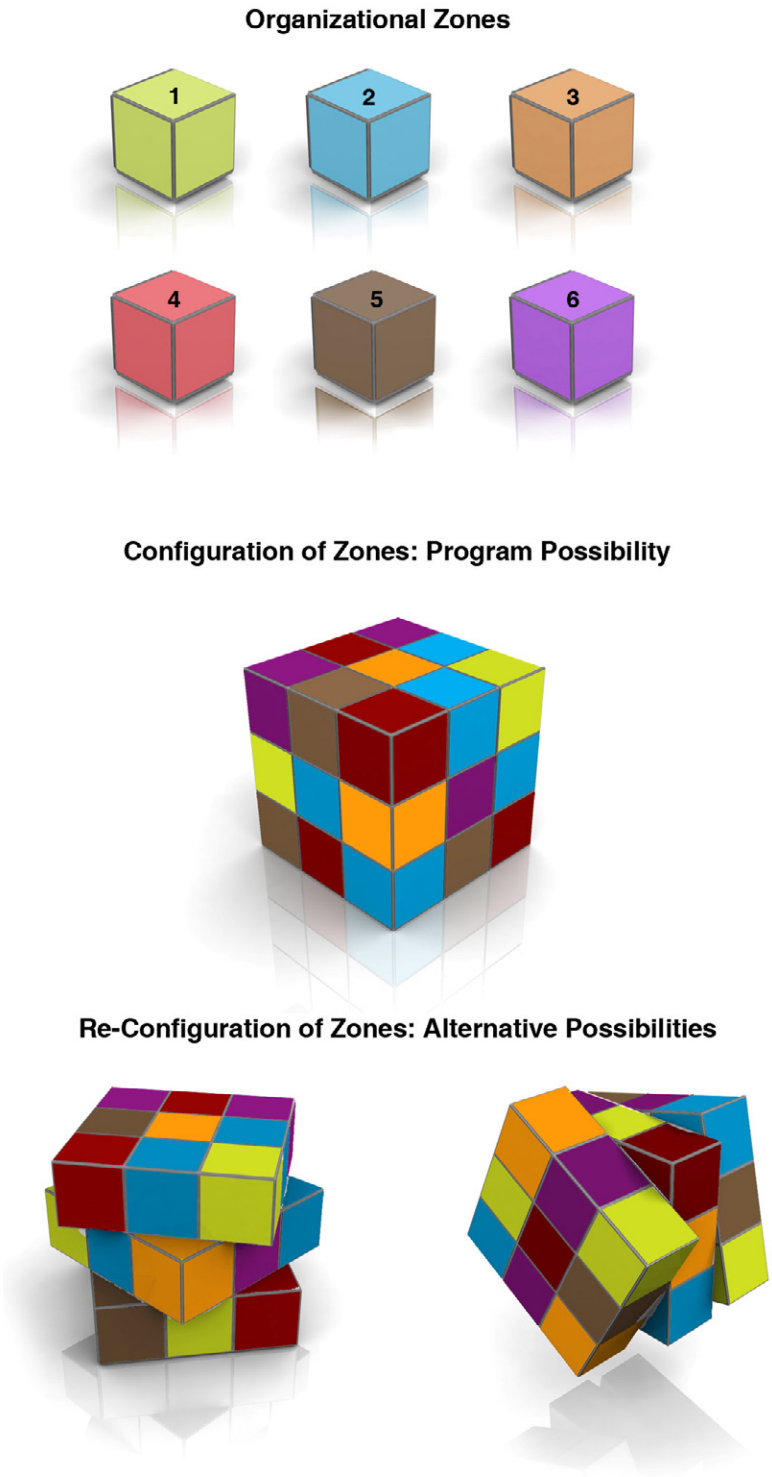


Figure 4.8 Rubik's Cube analogy. Produced by the author.

Correspondingly, the architectural scheme also follows a system of zoning. In the case of physical spaces, the organizational zones (described by the Cybernetics Subcommittee) have to be provided with the flexibility of housing various possibilities. In pursuit of this task, Price proposes "a fully interchangeable plastic model assembly kit of a building",[157] that would contain *spatial zones* in which *organizational zones* can freely be regenerated. Beginning with the initial sketches, the drawings produced by Price feature a spatial zoning that leaves the maximum amount of room for participation for the *organizational zones*, while at the same time addressing demand for services and structural needs. It can be observed from various drawings that each illustration depicts a momentary scene of free organization made possible by a clearly defined structural service matrix (figure 4.9).

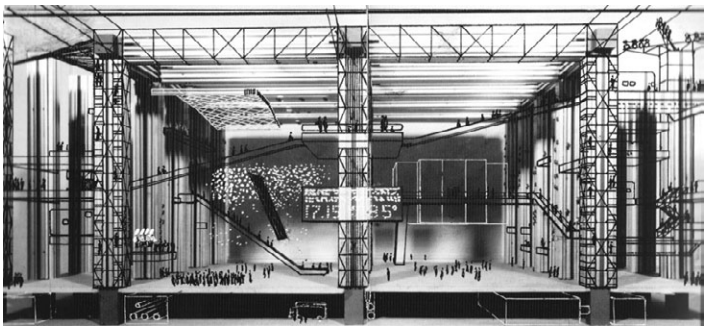
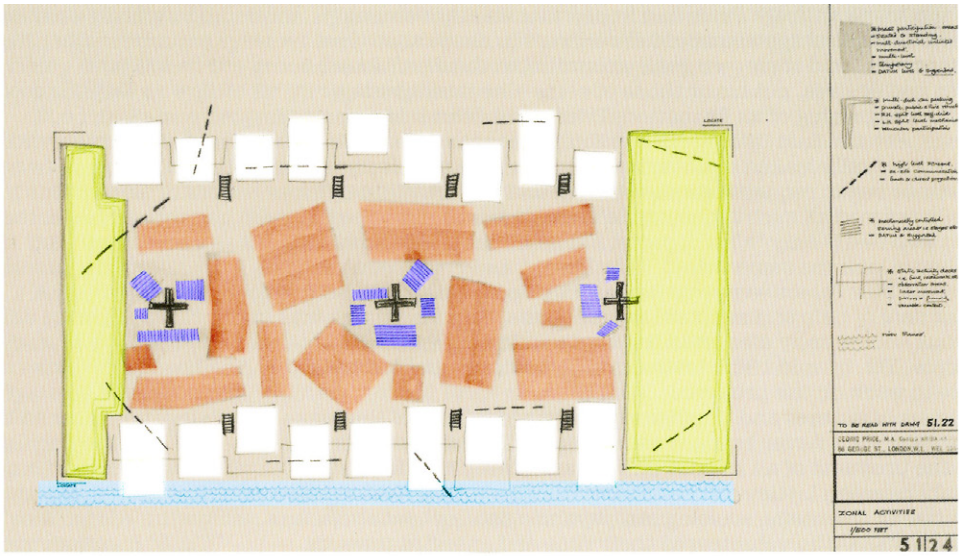


Figure 4.9 Interior Perspective of the Fun Palace, white gouache and black ink on gelatin silver print. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 90-91.

The progression of Fun Palace diagrams sheds light on the reflection of the program on physical space. The early drafts of organizational scheme designed by Price present a strong concern for the availability of *gaps* required by the variety of activities. In order to couple the productive momentum of the program possibilities, the first schemes drawn by Price illustrate random "mass-participation areas" scattered in a large central space. These areas are serviced by flexible "mechanically controlled service masses", which are gathered around service towers (figure 4.10). By intending to keep interventions to the central space to a minimum, the project displays a concern for *blurring physical boundaries* of the activities (in accordance with the blurring of the programmatic boundaries).

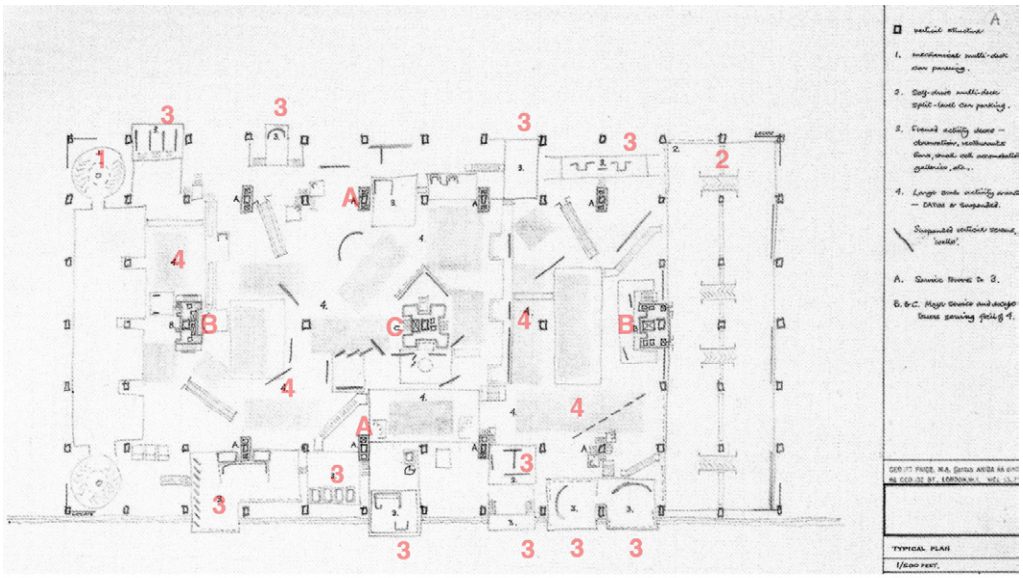
[157] Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System," 34.



	MASS PARTICIPATION AREAS:	SEATED AND STANDING, MULTI-DIRECTIONAL UNLIMITED MOVEMENT, MULTI LEVEL, TEMPORARY, DATUM LEVEL & SUSPENDED
	MECHANICALLY CONTROLLED SERVING MASS:	STORAGES ETC., DATUM LEVEL & SUSPENDED
	STATIC ACTIVITY DECKS (I.E. RESTAURANTS):	OBSERVATION AREAS, LINEAR MOVEMENT, DATUM LEVEL & FRAMED, CHANGEABLE CONTENT
	MULTI-DECK CAR PARKING:	PRIVATE, PUBLIC AND HIRE VEHICLES, SPLIT LEVEL SELF-DRIVE
	HIGH-LEVEL SCREENS:	EX-SITE COMMUNICATIONS, BACK & DIRECT PROJECTION
	RIVER THAMES	

Figure 4.10 Early interior physical zoning diagram of Fun Palace. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 76. Edited by the author.

It can be read in the diagram (figure 4.10) that even at the initial stages, Price conceptualizes activity space as a sum of multiple spaces varying in size. The fact that he prefers to do so, instead of marking a single huge space as "mass participation area", presents a conjugate approach with program design. Moreover, Price notes that the "mass participation area*s*" and the "mechanically controlled serving masses" can either be located on datum level, or be suspended. Thus the mass participation area*s* are also provided with the option of interaction within itself as well as with the surrounding frame on three dimensions. Surrounding the mass participation areas are "static activity decks", which are framed in between the structural elements. These activity decks provide space for less-space requiring activities, as well as provoking observation of other activities and the vista. By utilization of the structural frame as such, the project attains a high level of relation between various activity spaces.



1. Mechanical multi-deck car parking
2. Self drive multi-deck split-level car parking
3. Framed activity decks
4. Large scale activity areas
\ suspended vertical screens: "walls"

A. Service towers to 3
B&C. Major service and escape towers serving focii of 4.

Figure 4.11 Revised early interior physical zoning diagram of Fun Palace. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 77. Edited by the author.

The possibilities acquired by various combinations of mass participation areas can be observed in the sequential drawings of the scheme. Furthermore, the more-detailed revision of the earlier scheme illustrates the diversity of possibilities for relatively restricting zones. For instance, although the framed activity decks seem to be limited in size and vista, Price illustrates the possibility of multiple physical and visual relations between various framed activity decks (figure 4.11). The framed activity decks are either used as floor planes, or loaded with various self-contained units: "these are built-up standard-unit 'boxes' of reinforced plastic and aluminum, set on and serviced from open 'decks'".[158] The physical restrictions of the structural frame are turned into potentials for housing temporary micro-programs. Approvingly, a preliminary study on diversity of programs that can be contained in this structural system was made by Price for a Fun Palace pilot project intended to be built in Camden (figure 4.12).

[158] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 133.

The physical structure is also utilized to deliver building services (i.e. pipes) and necessary circulation routes (i.e. staff movement or escape). Along the progression of the design phase, it is seen that the structure is refined into a minimum frame within which service demands of various possible programs can be answered. The basement level covers all stationary service units (i.e. sewage purification plant) as well as storages and car-parking. The structural frame delivers the services provided in the basement level to all upper levels. Hence, the physical structure intends to service activity spaces without unnecessarily distracting them:

> The structure is serviced by a three-dimensional grid and an 'ariable net of packaged conditioning equipment' distributed across a gigantic plinth housing a sewage purification plant and other support systems.[159]

It is seen that the variety in organizational possibilities can thus be embedded into the logic of the structural frame. In addition to the structural frames, the central space has also been worked on for possibilities of reconfiguration. The central space (reserved for participation) can be altered by demountable units carried via traveling cranes, and inflatable structures: "kit of service towers, lifting gantries and building components exists solely to produce the kind of interior environments that are *necessary and fitting to whatever is going on*."[160]

Taking advantage of this system, activities may occupy either the ground level, or higher levels suspended in the third dimension. The possibilities emerging from inter and intra-organizations of the central space and the structural frame thus result in a degree of flexibility, producing *gaps of uncertainty* relatively close to that of the program. Conceptually, the Rubik's cube analogy, which has been used to examine the organizational zones, can also be used to understand physical organizational possibilities of the structure. The central space and the surrounding structural frame provide room for *diverse combinations of organizational zones*. Although the momentum of the program can be considered almost impossible to reflect onto built form, it can be seen that the concerns guiding programmatic organizations can also guide the design of the physical structures. Configured this way, organizational zones are provided with spatial flexibility within the availabilities of contemporaneous practical realities.

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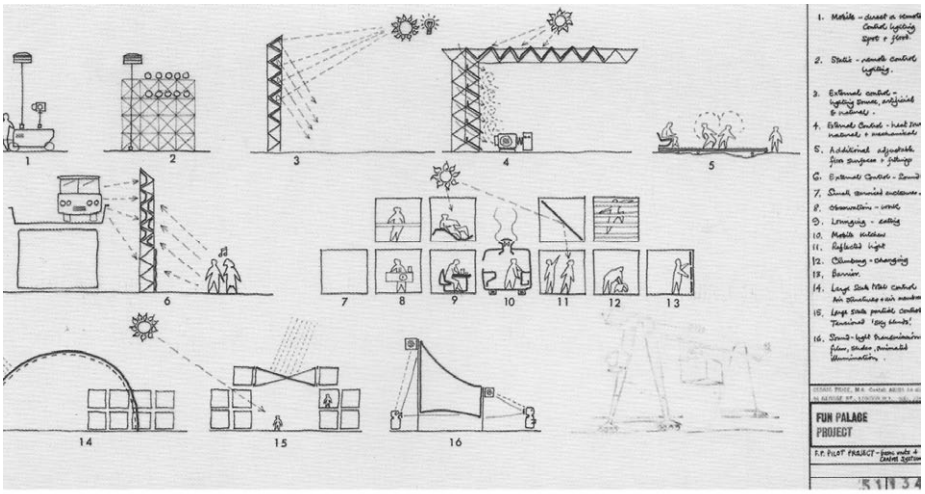
[159] Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of Performance," 24.

[160] John Frazer, untitled article in *Cedric Price: Opera*, ed. Samantha Hardingham (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2003), 46. Emphasis added.



1. Mobile - direct or remote, control lighting, spot + floods. **2.**Static remote-control lighting. **3.** External control - lighting source, artificial & natural. **4.** External control - heat source, natural & mechanical. **5.** Additional adjustable fun surfaces and fittings. **6.** External control - sound. **7.** Small serviced enclosure. **8.** Observation **9.** Lounging - eating **10.** Mobile kitchen **11.** Reflected light **12.** Climbing - changing **13.** Barrier **14.** Large scale total control air structure + air membrane **15.** Large scale partial control, tensioned 'sky blinds' **16.** Sound - light transmission flow, studio, animated illumination

Figure 4.12 Standard-unit boxes and the structural frame possibilities, Fun Palace pilot project. Source: Mary Louise Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance: Cedric Price's Fun Palace", in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, eds. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejéan Legault (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 123.

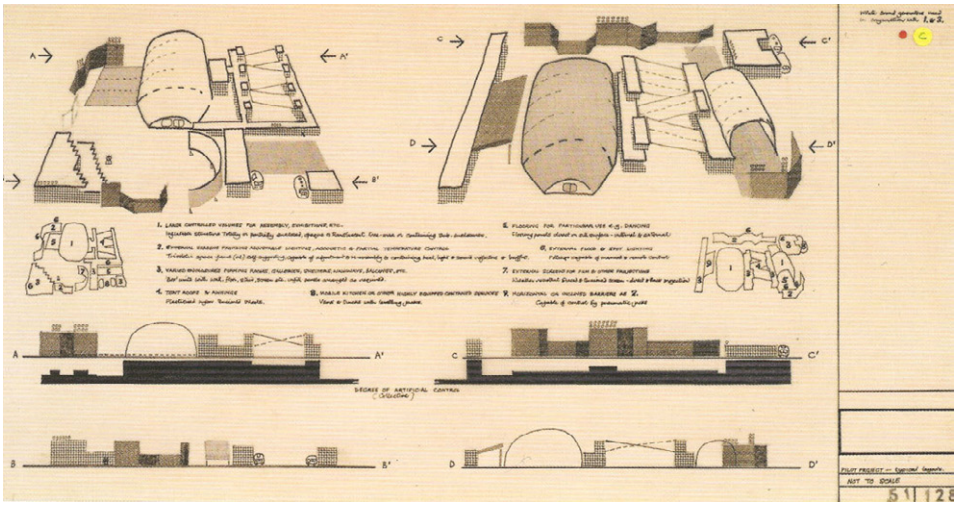


Figure 4.13 Layout scheme, Fun Palace pilot project. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 126.

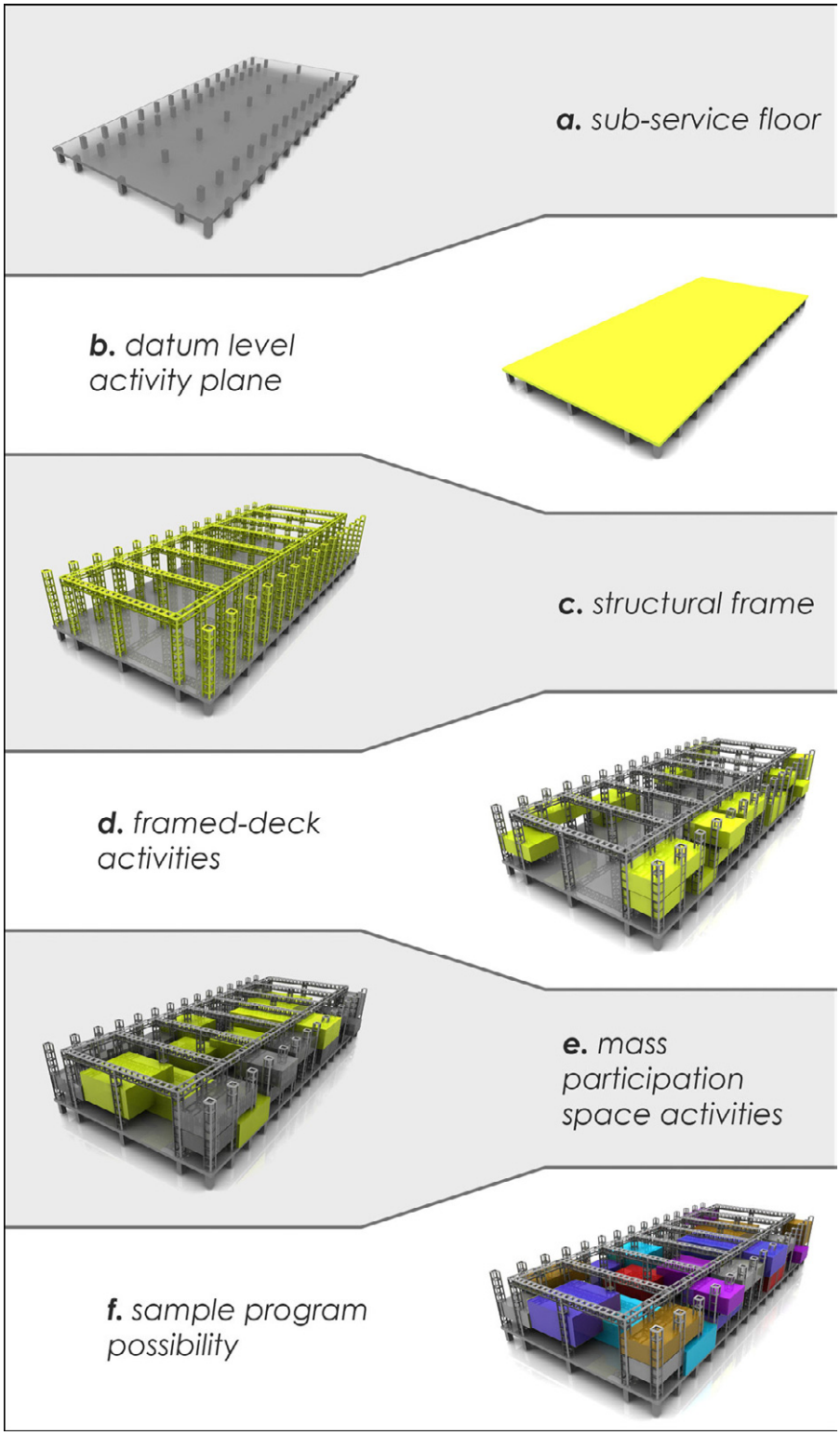


Figure 4.14 Organizational scheme. Produced by the author.

Frank Newby's (structural engineer of the Fun Palace design team) revision of the structural plan illustrates the design concerns discussed so far. The revised plan reflects the correspondence between the program potentials and the architecture. In order to keep in pace with the flexibility of activities, the scheme illustrates various sizes and shapes of spaces that present the diversity of spatial arrangements. The structural system, kept at the least degree of interference possible, is utilized to withhold different experiences of space. Hence numerous combinations of organizational zones can be provided with demanded spaces. Furthermore, the multi-layered conception of mass participation spaces, coupled by the framed decks on sides, provokes connections between different activities. In this respect, the plan can be read as a refinement of earlier sketches into a more practical vision (figure 4.15).

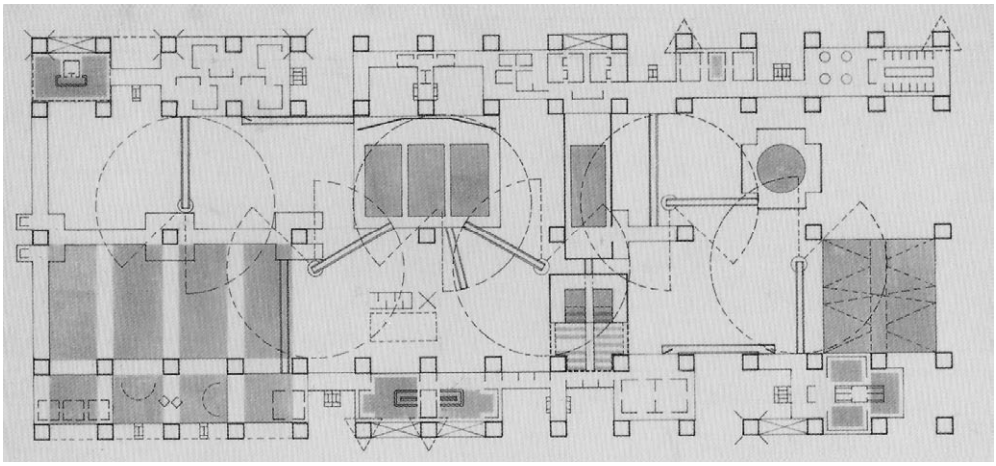


Figure 4.15 Revised structural plan of Fun Palace. Source: Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," *The Drama Review: TDR* 12, no.3 (Spring 1968): 133, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0012-962%28196821%2912%3A3%3C127%3ATFP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8 (accessed 30 December 2007).

4.3.2 Pattern: Distortion of Time

It has been argued so far that the potential for flexibility in spatial configurations constitutes significantly to the practice of program possibilities. As the processing of activities can result in numerous new configurations, the physical space has to reconfigure itself to enable various programs. Having said that, as important as spatial reconfigurations is the circulation through various activities. The means of flow in

between the diverse programs presents a major design concern in the Fun Palace project. On a quickly drawn cross-section of the project (figure 4.16), Price approvingly notes:

> Flexibility within the complex is not confined to the variation of the form and disposition of the enclosures and areas provided, but also by the ability to vary the public movement patterns through adjustment of mechanical movement aids (escalators, travelators etc.).[161]

It is seen that movement is considered as a major constituent of flexibility within the complex. At first, the reason for emphasizing public movement in the complex appears to be the spontaneous access to various activities. Considering the diverse program possibilities of the project, the movement in-between *gaps of uncertainty* presents an important challenge for the design. The proposed solution concordantly utilizes *adjustability* for movement within the complex. The pivoted stairs (as observed in central axis of the revised plan presented in figure 4.15), as well as adjustable travelators all reflect the conception of *change* as they can be readjusted to contain various spatial configurations. Besides adapting to the changes in functions, however, movement of the users also contributes to an equally essential experience of *change*. Movement within the complex itself creates a *change* in users' experiences, which echoes a rather important conception regarding design:

> Design is concerned with conscious *distortion of time, distance and size*. If it achieves none of these distortions it is unlikely to be more than the elaboration of the status quo.[162]

Price's inference on "distortion of time, distance and size" contributes to Fun Palace design from various aspects. The conception of "distortion" has been interpreted earlier in this chapter for its contribution to the program design process. It has been briefly argued that gaps of uncertainty benefited fairly from distortion of conventional conceptions by blurring their definitional boundaries. Moreover, the continuous phase of processing activities made possible the formulation of new activities by providing distorted interactions between constituent demands of activities. Subsequently, the movement of the user within gaps of uncertainty forms another major stream of alternative experience in time.

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[161] Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," 74.

[162] Price, "73 Snacks," under "14: Time". Emphasis added.

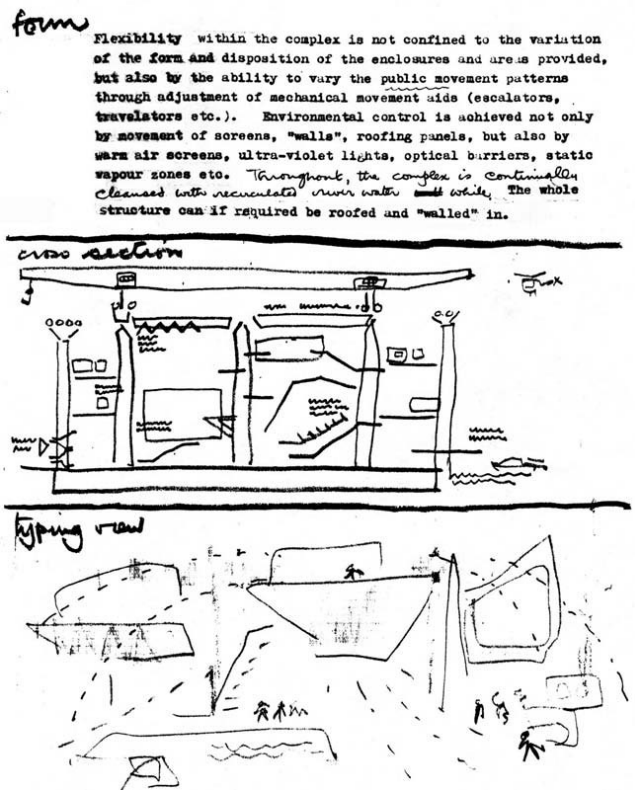

Figure 4.16 Notes on Fun Palace, cross section and perspective. Source: Stanley Mathews, "The Fun Palace: Cedric Price's Experiment in Architecture and Technology," *Technoetic Arts: A Journal of Speculative Research* 3, no.2 (2005): 74.

Movement among gaps of uncertainty can be considered as an activity of *change* by itself. Circulation among various activities (or even the preparations for activities), provides the user with multiple temporal and spatial experiences in a single social space. To remind at this point, Price's last remark on change points out the importance of distortion of time and location for social benefits:

> Libraries are a socially beneficial distorter of TIME and LOCATION enabling OBSERVATION and REFLECTION AT WILL to the INDIVIDUAL. [163]

In light of Price's point, it has been suggested that the program diversity in Fun Palace renders it as *a library of social experiences*. Subsequently, movement among various social

[163] Ibid., under "07: Change". Emphasis original.

experiences provides a medium that provokes the user to participate in the "distortion of time, distance and size". "Observation of every single activity presents a set of different experiences. Therefore each activity –like the contents of a library– creates a distortion in the perception of time according to its own nature. In this respect, movement among gaps of uncertainty can be considered as an ever-changing social experience by itself, as it provides the user with distorted perceptions of time. Consequently, the conception of time plays an important role in both social experiences and physical form:

> Price's architecture dispenses with the visual and invites us to reconsider the *experience of time and social interaction* in the present […] For Price, the social *produces* the architectural in *time* and the new forms of time and space are not comparable to what our perceptions have experienced to date.[164]

The concern with the experience of time also manifests itself in the set of drawings produced for the project. Strikingly, in the analytical diagrams illustrating the dimensions of the project, the distances measured in feet and inches are coupled by data on the *time* required to travel them (figure 4.17). The inclusion of time along with dimensions presents an appreciation for the experience of time along movement. Thinking on distances in units of time, one can argue that "distortion in time", created by social experiences, would also lead to "distortion of distance and size". In other words, the experience of space via time anticipates the experience of space via distance, and both are initiated by the observation (and participation in) social experiences. Price approvingly remarks about Fun Palace that:

> Inbuilt flexibility, or planned obsolescence, can be achieved only if the time factor is included as an absolute design factor in the total design process.[165]

The site layout for Fun Palace presents another step for integration of time as a design factor. Among the criteria for acceptable sites (for Fun Palace), Price and Littlewood list "Riverside Site" as the first article.[166] They explain that in the contemporaneous context, use of rivers for enjoyment is more relevant than the evident economic uselessness. Approvingly, both of the two sites that had been suggested for Fun Palace are on river banks.[167] Rivers' first contribution to the program is in terms of experience of time. The constant flow of the river

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[164] Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of Performance," 28. Emphasis added.

[165] Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price," 57.

[166] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 275-76.

[167] The first proposed Fun Palace site, at the Isle of Dogs, was on the banks of the River Thames and Glengall Wharf. The second proposed site was on Lea River Valley.

is expected to convey a sense of flowing time. Hence, while participating in an activity with its own time and space, the flow of the river introduces another scale of continuous time flow. In this respect, the flow of the river contributes the *distortion of time*, as the user experiences multiple time flows.

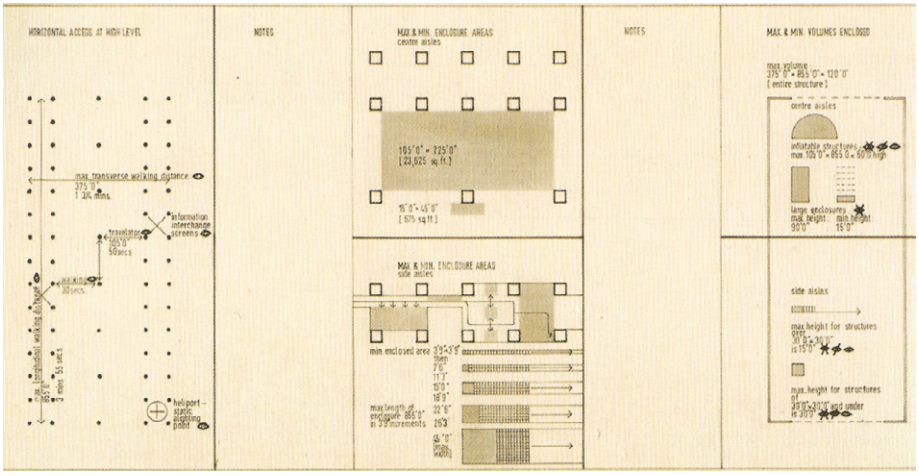

Figure 4.17 Analytical diagrams for access, enclosure and volume. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 81.

Besides contributing to the individual experiences within the program, the "riverside site" also appears as an important element of Price and Littlewood's "Ideal Site" diagram (figure 4.18). In an article describing the project (and subsequently in the diagram) "river" is depicted as a contributor to the wider network of communications and mobility within the site.

The diagram clearly describes the need for access to Fun Palace from various sources. The project is depicted in the center of flowing circulation lines, including every means of transport: "Waterborne, airborne and air-cushioned vehicles are variants on a pair of walking shoes".[168] In this respect, mobility and experience of time are observed as significant factors in defining the site. Price and Littlewood's elaboration on the accessibility of the site hints at deeper concerns regarding the "ideal site":

[168] Price and Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," 133.

> The siting exploits existing communication networks and gives a clue to the potential enrichment of life through increasing mobility at present unrealized in large urban communities […] The Fun Palace must also be sited so as to allow random time-usage. Thus, the varied communication routes must be those of a metropolitan or regional network *passing* the site. This condition enables the use and degree of attention afforded by the public to the activities of the site to vary according to the changing scale and intensity of use of a metropolitan region during the life-span of the Palace.[169]

It is seen in the description that for the Fun Palace project to function properly, it has to "allow random time-usage". Therefore, as the ideal site diagram illustrates, the site should be part of the experience of the most diverse options of mobility possible, ranging from the pedestrian to airborne vehicles. The prefigured variety for means of access to the site is presented vividly in drawings produced for the project. For instance, the occasional helicopter or boat makes appearance repeatedly in the project drawings (figure 4.19). Even more strikingly, a perspective of the project is drawn as seen from the cockpit of a helicopter (figure 4.20). Hence it is seen that the importance of mobility is emphasized in project depictions.

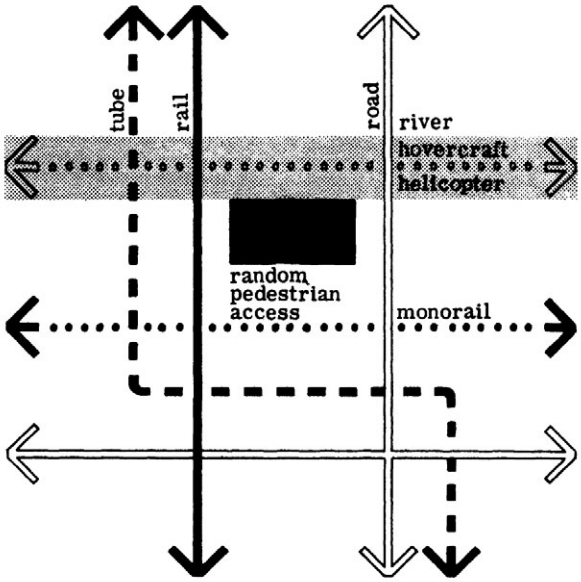

Figure 4.18 Ideal Site. Source: Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," *The Drama Review: TDR* 12, no.3 (Spring 1968): 132, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0012-962%28196821%2912%3A3%3C127%3ATFP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8 (accessed 30 December 2007).

[169] Ibid.

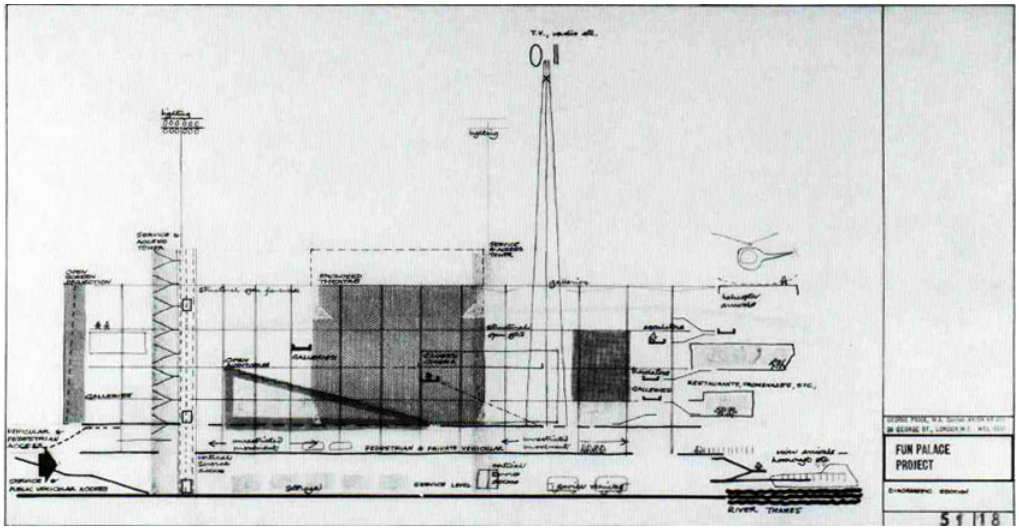

Figure 4.19 Section. Source: Mary Louise Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of Performance," *Daidalos* 74 (2000): 24.

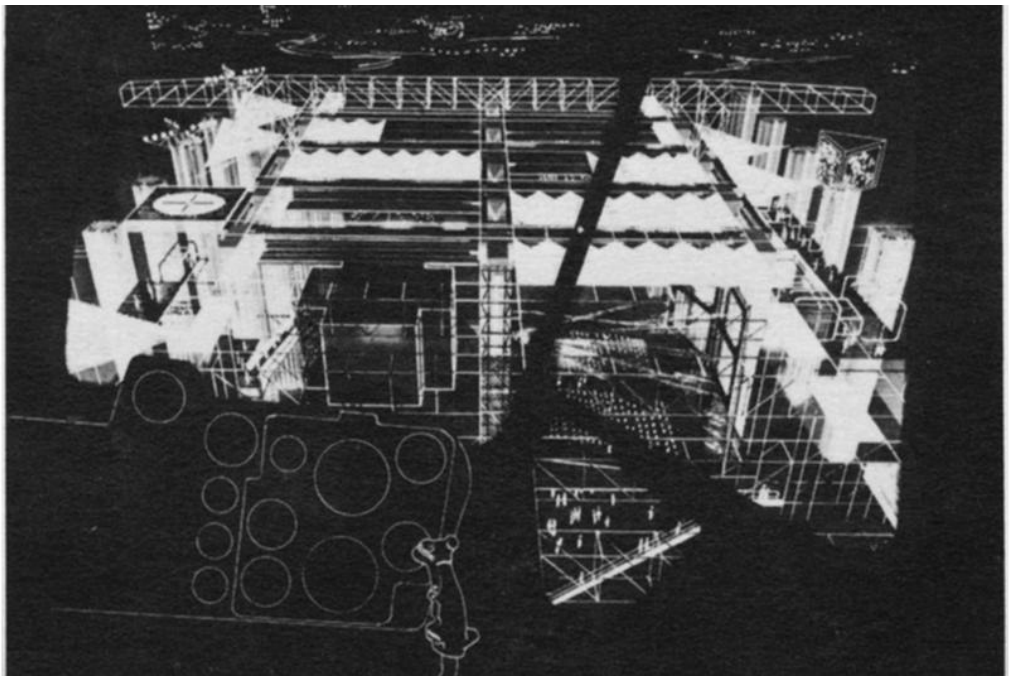

Figure 4.20 View of Fun Palace from approaching helicopter. Source: Joan Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," *The Drama Review: TDR* 12, no.3 (Spring 1968): 134, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0012-962%28196821%2912%3A3%3C127%3ATFP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8 (accessed 30 December 2007).

The ideal site diagram (figure 4.18) also presents, however, the project should not be at the center of these routes. If it had been conceived as a terminal for "communication routes", the use of Fun Palace would be limited to "the occasion" and "the event" (using Price and Littlewood's words), rather than the random participation of the passerby. Therefore the project should be located on a site through which "communication routes" *pass*. In other words, the project should be part of the everyday temporal experience of the passing traveler, rather than being the space of a certain event. Hence, the "communication routes" are those "*passing* the site", rather than routes ending in the site.

Being located on communicational routes passing the site, the Fun Palace project would also have made possible the observation of the site alterations ("according to the changing scale and intensity of use of a metropolitan region") in time. From this perspective, the project and its surrounding site are variables related to time. That is to say time plays a crucial role in the changing perceptions conveyed by the site through varying uses. As it continuously changes its configuration, the unconventional structure can only be understood with regard to time, as an ongoing process ending upon completion of its "life-span". In this respect, designating a "life-span" for Fun Palace vividly manifests the significance of time as a communicative medium for social experience.

4.4 Representing "Planned Obsolescence"

It is significant that although Fun Palace had not been built, it has stirred much debate and has inspired the designs of various later projects. This particular point displays the fact that the project still communicates effectively with its audience many years after its cancellation by Price. In this respect, the "planned obsolescence" –borrowing Price's words– of Fun Palace has been influential for it provokes and challenges the minds of the readers as its audience (which would have included actual users as well, had the project been built). Hence, communication once more manifests its contribution to the project. Just as the project aims to establish communications via its ever-changing programs, the representations of the project aim to establish efficient communications with its audience. While commenting on the office "Cedric Price Architects", Simon Allford approvingly notes that the underlying aim of their presentations is "to communicate the office's perception of the practical value of the project"[170] by including the necessary amount of detail and avoiding unnecessary "fuss".

[170] Simon Allford, "On Price and Value – Constructing the Idea", in in *Cedric Price Opera*, ed. Samantha Hardingham, (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2003), 88.

Concordantly, both the written and drawn representations of Fun Palace follow the same logic of clarity and economy:

> A critical element in Price's priorities has always been a recognition of the value of *clarity* and *economy* in both the verbal and graphic images in the necessary presentation of critical information. He has long been a master in achieving an effective short hand of relevant graphics, culled to a minimum effective expression and thereby telegraphing that essence of the content most directly.[171]

The pamphlets, questionnaires, and other kinds of promotional literature produced for Fun Palace all display a similar concern for clarity, and are presented in such an economy that makes them legible for any audience. The intention behind the promotional works is seen to be challenging the audience to form the representation in their minds. For instance, the sets of promotional literature produced by Price and Littlewood (figure 4.1, figure 4.2) all hint about the promises of Fun Palace in terms of the readers' own experience. By asking the readers where they see themselves in 5 years, the texts provoke them to think about future possibilities. Furthermore, by suggesting options such as a trip to the moon, or making Moscow in twenty minutes, the poster aims to challenge readers' imagination. In this respect, the promotions, similar to the program, aim to blur the definitional boundaries of convention. To clarify, the promotional literature provokes to participate in the process by imagining how the future can be. In turn, the resultant figurations are utilized as the representation of possibilities presented by Fun Palace. In other words, the representations foster readers' imaginations on the possible experiences in Fun Palace. For instance, a promotional poster reads "FIRST GIANT SPACE MOBILE IN THE WORLD, it moves in light, turns winter into summer ….toy…. EVERYBODY'S, what is it?" (figure 4.21).

While on the one hand challenging the readers' expectance for possibilities, on the other the representations display clues as to how the project will operate. In this sense, they communicate strongly about the program possibilities and flexibility. The cover of a brochure for the pilot project proposal in Camden lists some possible activities in large letters over a perspective drawing for the project. Strikingly, names of the activities are written in a way that they overlap, similar to the activities' interferences with each other in Fun Palace program possibilities. On the bottom of the page, large and bold letters read "for your delight", incorporating the user as the protagonist of the project (figure 4.22).

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[171] Ward, "Cedric Price: Projects '84-'02," 30.

Figure 4.21 Fun Palace promotional poster. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 135.

The representations also communicate that the project is designed for actual practice. The programmatic flexibility –that would serve change of experiences whenever required– is intended to be realized. Relevantly, in the representations the project is usually depicted in practice. On the perspectives, while some activity spaces are depicted as completed and running, some others occasionally appear under construction. In addition to the activities' depictions, the representations occasionally display the project as existing on site. A proper example of this case is the illustration of Fun Palace on site in the Lea Valley Development Plan (figure 4.23).

Even the more technical representations (such as diagrams for plans, sections, and perspectives) correspondingly follow the target of communication. Akin to Fun Palace itself, its plans and sections are more diagrams than exact drawings. Its perspectives denote various instantaneous configurations instead of static images. It can be seen from the examples that the technical representations of Fun Palace are strikingly relevant with its ever-changing program possibilities. Harmonious with Cedric Price Architects' aforementioned target of effective presentations, these illustrations provide the needed amount of information, while preserving the sense of flexibility. For instance, a perspective depicting Fun Palace at night briefly conveys the information that the place will be flooded with lights (when required), embody many different activity spaces at a given instant, and will be reached via boat, road, or helicopters, to name a few (figure 4.24).

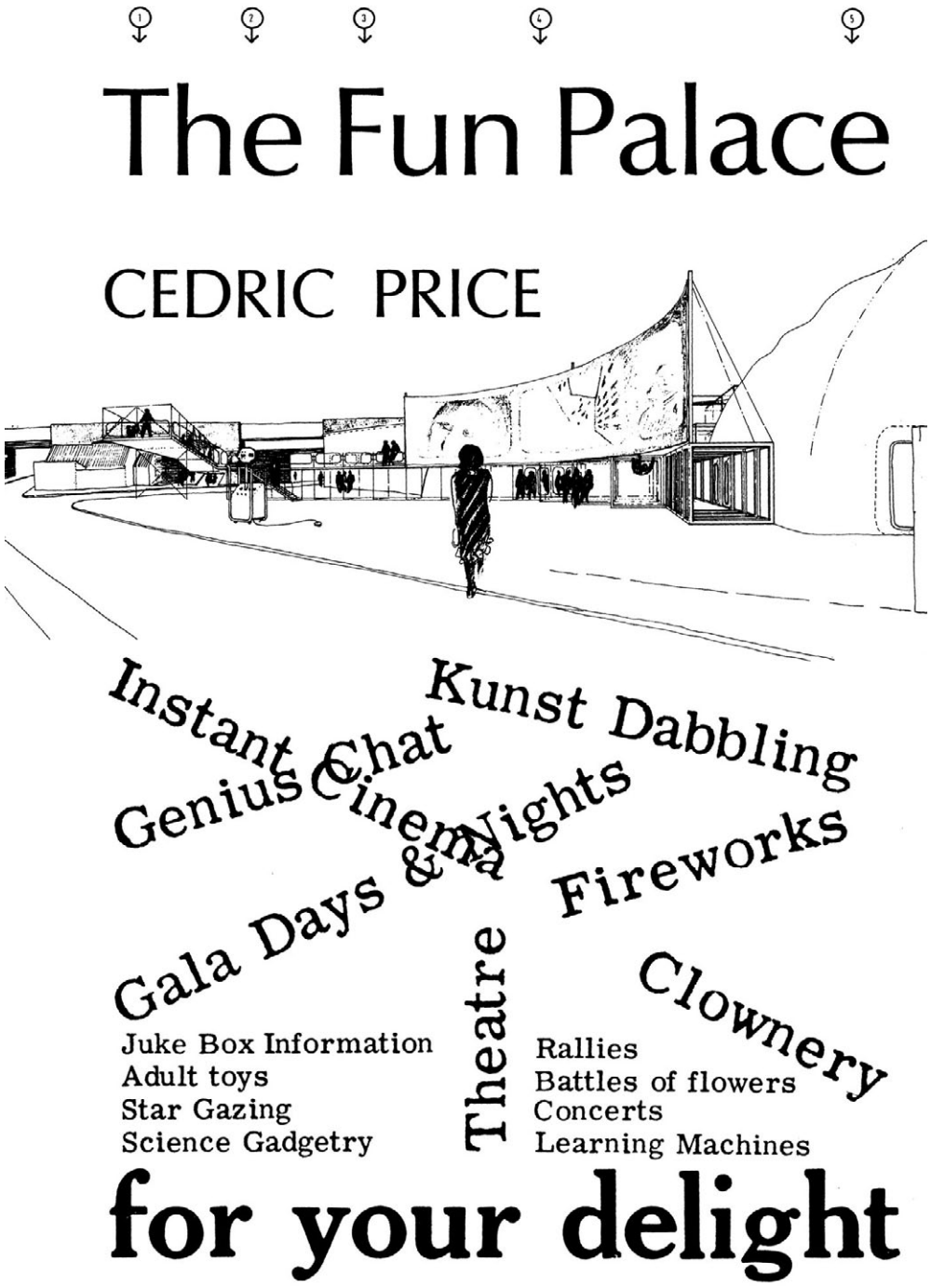

Figure 4.22 Fun Palace promotional poster, Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood. Source: Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, "The Fun Palace," *The Drama Review: TDR* 12, no.3 (Spring 1968): 127, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0012-962%28196821%2912%3A3%3C127%3ATFP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8 (accessed 30 December 2007).

Figure 4.23 Lea Valley Development Plan brochure. Fun Palace is depicted on site, on the bottom right. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 134.

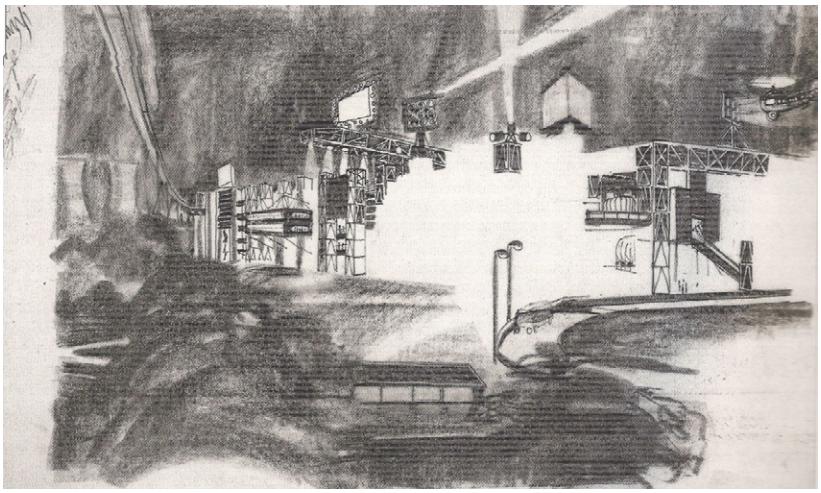

Figure 4.24 Fun Palace night perspective. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 174.

As observed in various representations of Fun Palace, the project is depicted as a "kit of parts" without any specific form. Various perspectives illustrate the space under construction, with emphasis on the movement and participation of the people. Furthermore, the logic of the "kit of parts" is not limited to the illustrated scenes. Rather, the kit of parts forms the production logic of the illustrations themselves. The diagrams produced for the project often resemble assembly manuals of mechanical devices. Peter Murray points out that Price strips architecture to a "*service* with *servicing*", which requires representations other than conventional architectural illustrations:

> Standard forms, elevations and perspectives mean little in the terms of Price's work: his plans are kits of parts and circuit diagrams; his details are catalogue specifications. He presents a complete and conscious reversal of current procedure, disposing of the traditional constraints of the pre-electric age and stripping *architecture* down to a *service* with *servicing*.[172]

Murray's point of "kit of parts" as representation can be clearly observed in an axonometric diagram of Fun Palace (figure 4.25). Drawn partly as a blow-up diagram and partly as an axonometric architectural drawing, the illustration calls images of manuals for do-it-yourself kits into mind. The manual-like representation becomes all the more relevant if one considers that Fun Palace was intended to be shaped by users, analogous with the logic of do-it-yourself kits. Hence, representations of the project as such let the readers prefigure that the space will be built by users, as a "kit of parts".

The logic of the machine also presents itself in other studies related to the operational mechanism of the project. As mentioned earlier, the controlling of reconfigurations in Fun Palace is assigned to cybernetic systems, which would receive and process the input from activities and provide information about their efficiencies. In turn, it is proposed that the information gathered as such is to be used in the configuration of future ideas. Although the corresponding diagram and the accompanying report point out to a disconcerting output of "modified people" (the Orwellian connotations of which were eventually confronted by media),[173] it prefigures an organization that would have sounded the social concerns of the project. The cybernetic organization produced by the Cybernetics Subcommittee is represented in an organizational diagram similar to a scheme of machinery (figure 4.26).

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[172] Peter Murray, introduction to "Cedric Price Supplement", in *Supercrit #1: Cedric Price, Potteries Thinkbelt*, eds. Samantha Hardingham and Kester Rattenbury, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 86

[173] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 156.

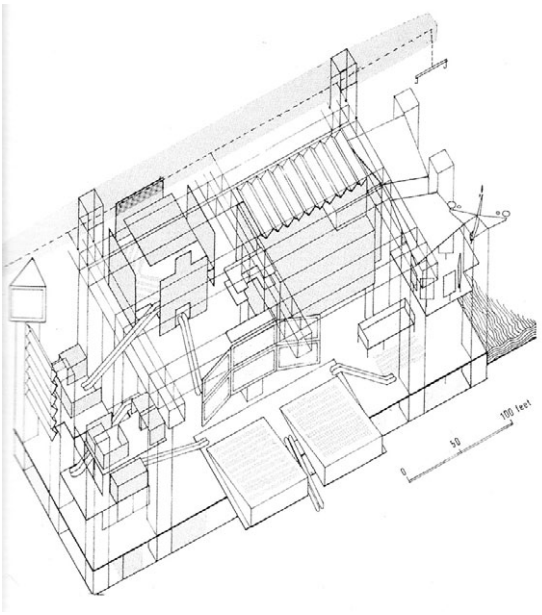

Figure 4.25 Fun Palace axonometric diagram: kit of parts. Source: Arata Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System", in *Re:Cp*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 29.

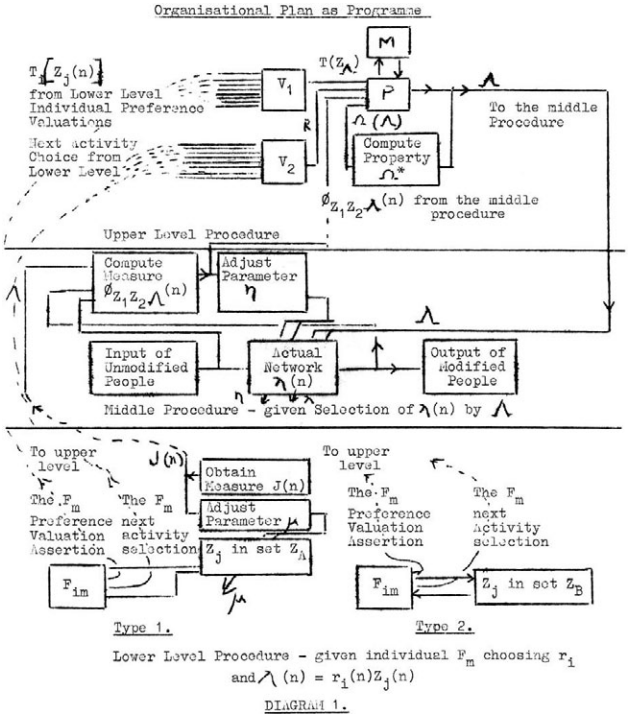

Figure 4.26 Diagram of cybernetic control system of Fun Palace, Gordon Pask, 1965. Source: Mary Louise Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance: Cedric Price's Fun

Palace," in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, eds. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejéan Legault (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 131.

Overall, the representations of Fun Palace provoke their audience (both designers and potential users) to elaborate on the possibilities of alternative programs. In addition, by following the logic of "kit of parts", project representations point out that the project is capable of continuous configuration in order to adapt varying program requirements. In this respect, the representations of Fun Palace cover both programmatic and physical structures devised. The common aspect of both is the concern of provoking alternative social experiences in an interactive environment of leisure and learning. The challenge of blurring conventional conceptions regarding everyday experience communicates vividly through project representations to the present day.

4.5 Discussion

> Of the more than four hundred drawings consisting of time schedules, movement diagrams, mechanical drawings, details and perspectives, this conceptual sketch [Price's first sketch for Fun Palace] still accurately captures the essence of the scheme. It is more than expressive of spatial qualities, formal characteristics or structural necessities; but then, there really isn't much to describe in terms of the architectonic qualities or materiality of Fun Palace since, as Price laconically stated, "It's a kit of parts, not a building," adding that he doubted whether it would ever look the same twice.[174]

In her article titled "Cedric Price: An Architecture of the Performance", Lobsinger points out that for Price, architectural form is a product of multiple uncontrollable variables such as social actors, weather, and time. The emphasis is placed on the usage of the building, rather than the building itself. In a complex and extraordinary case such as Fun Palace, architectural form almost spontaneously becomes a side-function of the social program, designed to adequately service program requirements without tackling the potential for progressive use. Anthony Vidler clearly depicts the case by noting that "…one might be able to diagram the system of Platonic ideals, but never the ideal forms themselves." [175] Consonantly, Fun Palace devises more an *improvisational program* than an ideal configuration for activities. The physical structure harmoniously proposes alterable spaces without insisting on or emphasizing any particular one. In this sense, the building form is preceded by the possibilities of varying social programs.

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[174] Lobsinger, "Cedric Price: An Architecture of Performance," 24.

[175] Vidler, "Diagrams of Utopia," 7.

The design phase of a social program (or various social programs, in the case of Fun Palace) requires social imagination, which is formed through observation and critique of the present conditions. Consonantly, social imagination is the core constituent of utopia. As has been explained, however, the conception of utopia in this context should not be considered via conventional means. The conception of utopia as an obligatory impractical design is in fact challenged by the adopted re-definition. Utopia as conceptualized in this context is *a social critique that suggests guidelines to facilitate change*. As such, it utilizes patterns to guide processes, rather than producing a complete image of unreachable Utopia. In this respect, patterns and the case of Fun Palace have been compromised in terms of critical social imagination. While introducing his conception of "critical utopianism", Jarvie points out that for architects a danger concerning the future lies in "not building cities to live in, but challenging people to be fit to live in his cities."[176] Resonantly, what Price offers, instead of long term planning, is "calculated change"[177] with no particular goals in physical terms.

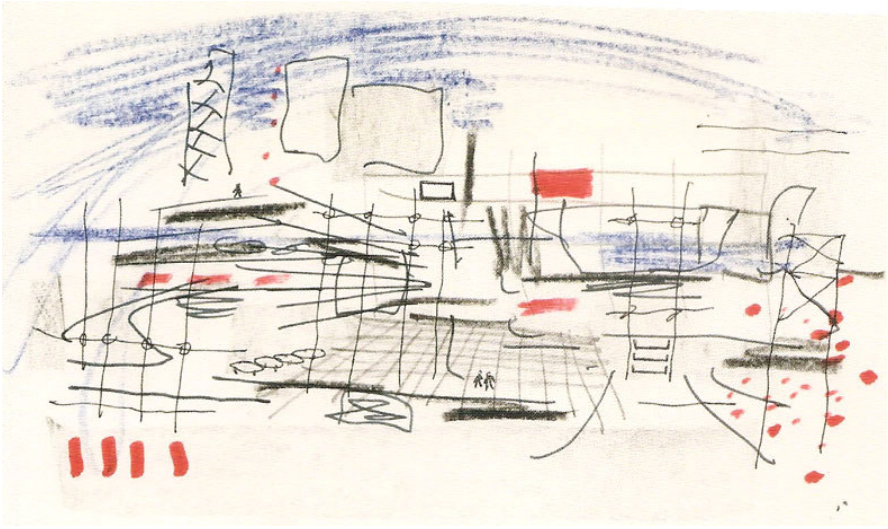

Figure 4.27 Early Conceptual Sketch of Fun Palace Interior, Cedric Price, 1963. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 67.

[176] Jarvie, "Utopian Thinking and the Architect," 15.

[177] Ibid.

Lobsinger clearly points out that Fun Palace inherits a social critique conceptualized in terms of education and leisure.[178] In order to provide the flexibility required by their social imaginations, Price and Littlewood have formulated ongoing processes that would have generated and regenerated social communication via activities. Consistently, patterns define ongoing design processes conceptualized under critique of present conditions. They are guidelines for processing ideas and putting them to test. In this respect, patterns are manifested as relevant and promising tools of examination.

The patterns examined in the case have pointed out several qualities in the design of Fun Palace. Coleman defines patterns as liminal conceptions between existing conditions and renewed ones.[179] Consequently, patterns have helped tracking the process beginning with the social critique and continuing with the design of program alternatives. Fun Palace has been studied in terms of four patterns (the quantity of which can easily be increased upon further examination), each of which are utilized for understanding a different aspect of the project's social dimension. At this stage, it might be beneficial to reconsider the inferences made via patterns, through the scope of the social context and critical social imagination.

To begin with, all of the four patterns indicate a concern to keep up with *change*, which is a central debate issue in the project context. The postwar context is seen to have gone through the process of *change*.[180] As a matter of fact, change is a natural strain of war, and had been directly experienced by Price and Littlewood. Consequently, social upheaval in the aftermath had been coupled by an equal impetus in newly developed techniques of automation and control systems, rendering change as a core characteristic of experience. On the other hand, emerging modes of production and contemporaneous politics are seen to have used this change to alter social experience through a certain direction. Perhaps the most relevant example of this issue is the separation between work and leisure. Furthermore, the rising uneasiness on traditional dichotomies (such as the noble and the servant) and their connotations on everyday experience

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[178] Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance," 128.

[179] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 219.

[180] Toffler, *Future* Shock, 32. Toffler notes: "Discovery. Application. Impact. Discovery. We see here a chain reaction of *change*, a long, sharply rising curve of *acceleration in human social development*. […] the rising rate of *change* in the world around us disturbs our inner equilibrium, altering the very way in which we *experience life*." [Emphasis added]

(such as availability of education to all) are all initial social concerns that can be verified by arguments of Price:

> Further education and re-education must be viewed as a major industrial undertaking and not as a service run by gentleman for the few. Its resultant quality must stimulate its further use and not, as at present, merely enable statisticians to predict future demand under present conditions.[181]

The contextual social concerns can be related efficiently to the design of the Fun Palace via patterns. In the initial pattern of *blurring boundaries*, the challenges against conventional definitions of various social issues have been taken under consideration. It was illustrated by analysis that the program arguments of the project can be interpreted as a blurring of contemporaneous issues to break up conventional conceptions of social experience. The first step towards a new consciousness would be breaking borders of convention, so that change can find room to flourish. Thus, the pattern of blurring boundaries makes possible understanding the conception of gaps of uncertainty, which is an essential quality of the project.

Subsequently, the pattern of *processing the activities* expands gaps of uncertainty into the process of designing activities. Considering activities as processes and not products, the pattern illustrates how Fun Palace program structure differs from most contemporaneous projects on leisure and education (such as concert halls, movie theaters, or sports facilities). It has been observed that the activity prefiguration is to be an ongoing phase for Fun Palace. Furthermore, the break-down of activities into constituent demands have been interpreted to help formulating alternative activities even from conventional activity suggestions. Considered with regard to the social context, the processing of activities denotes a course to replenish public engagement in alternative kinds of social experience.

The third pattern, *kit of programs*, has been intended to illustrate the formation of program possibilities from activities, and their connection with the physical space. The study through this pattern results in the production of organizational schemes for the program possibilities and the physical space. It has been observed that the grouping of activities –in order to be able to control their progression– does not necessarily have to weaken program arguments. In addition, they can be used to foster fresh activities by interaction with each other. Consistently, the physical structure is presented as a kit of

[181] Cedric Price, "Life Conditioning", *Architectural Design* (October 1966): 484.

parts, accompanying the kit of programs. By considering the program and physical space reconfigurations as an ongoing process, the pattern has been studied for understanding how the technical availabilities of the times had been utilized to emancipate participatory programs. It is pointed out that alternative program configurations and spatial configurations both share the same kind of organizational structure, which are analogous to a Rubik's cube.

The last pattern studied in this thesis emphasizes *time* as a design factor in the project. It is seen that time and mobility both significantly contribute to the Fun Palace experience. In this regard, time and mobility are considered as contributors not only to the experience of activities within Fun Palace, but also to the experience of the structure as a whole via the scope of time. As depicted in the ideal site diagram (figure 4.18), Fun Palace was intended to be built on riverside site, which also would be on the course of various passing routes. In light of these data, the consideration of time factor as a contributing pattern renders certain project ideals legible. For instance, the life-span prefigured for the project can be interpreted as a precaution for decreasing program legitimization in time. Furthermore, considering time as a design factor evidently points out to concerns such as the need for random time-usage, or the conditional requirement of passing routes to sustain this usage.

Conceptualizing the time factor as a pattern, it has been argued that the project facilitates *distortion* of time just as it fuels distortion of conventional definitions to form programs. Reinitializing with every activity, the distortion of time would enhance the social experience within the complex. This particular quality has also been cross-studied via Price's definition of libraries as distorters of time, which was manifested years after the design of Fun Palace. Hence, besides helping to understand the design process of Fun Palace, the pattern also supports the architect's vision with project ideals.

The distortion of time in the Fun Palace design can be interpreted as a clever utilization of postwar experience regarding time and space. The postwar Britain has witnessed both the destruction of war, and the continuation of everyday life. The experience of space and time varied dramatically from ruins of war to undisturbed rural sites or regenerated urban scenes. For instance, the Festival of Britain (1951) with its delicately built optimistic structures was located on a previously bombed site near the river Thames, that

in turn produced a *distortion of time* by itself. It can be argued that the Festival created a distortion of time by providing experiences alternative to the present context. In the Festival of Britain, distortion of time constituted the experience as a natural outcome of the contemporaneous postwar context. In Fun Palace, distortion of time constitutes the programs as a conscious utilization for providing alternative tracks of experience and information to the visitors.

Consideration of Fun Palace via patterns also reveals that the project design benefits from critical observations of contemporaneous architectural production. The particular benefits of this condition can be observed from various points of view. The most obvious of these observations is seen to be the realization of the inadequacy of contemporaneous designs to come up with true alternatives. It has been mentioned in the third chapter that by the time Fun Palace was being designed, most of the other projects concerned with leisure ended up producing conventional programs and forms. The concern for going beyond status-quo to devise better fitting environments, as vividly introduced in Fun Palace, can be observed as a reappearing objective throughout Price's career.

Moreover, the benefits of critical observation are not limited to the detection of inadequacies. The project design also benefits from the successful ingredients of earlier experiences. For instance, the blurring of boundaries between the actor and the spectator has its roots back in Littlewood's Theatre Workshop. This particular quality of the theater company has been interpreted as a motive for blurring boundaries between the actor and the spectator in Fun Palace, as well as other predestined roles in society.

Overall, studying Fun Palace over patterns not only helps understanding the project from a different scope, but also provides one with a new set of inferences and questions that can facilitate the examination of other projects. In this sense, Fun Palace itself can be considered as a pattern, which may guide further meditation on social imagination and architectural practice. Many of the important subjects discussed in the case of Fun Palace can be observed in refined ways in Price's later projects such as Potteries Thinkbelt (1965), InterAction Centre (1974), Generator (1976), and Magnet (1999), which can be interpreted as a proof of the ways of thinking flourished in this project.

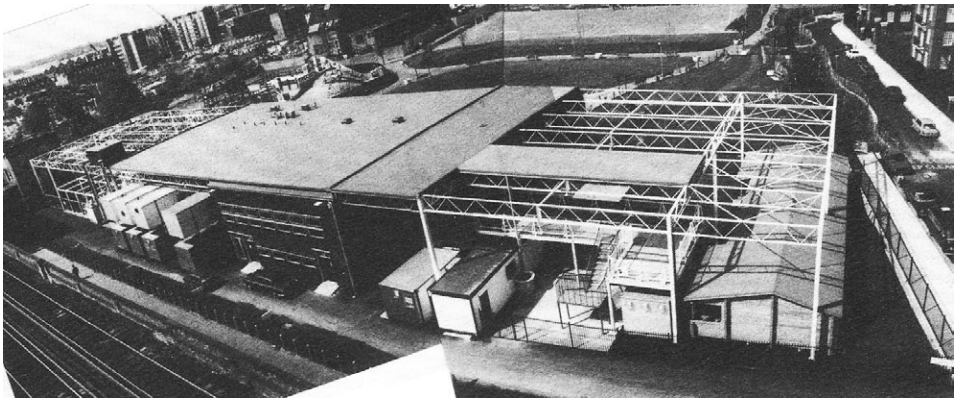

Figure 4.28 InterAction Centre. Source: *Supercrit #1: Cedric Price, Potteries Thinkbelt*, eds. Samantha Hardingham and Kester Rattenbury (New York: Routledge, 2007), 100.

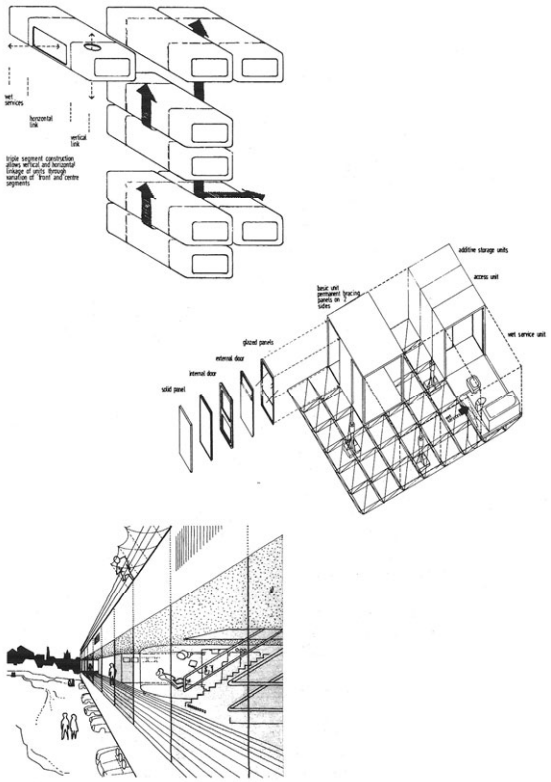

Figure 4.29 Potteries Thinkbelt: Crate housing, sprawl housing, and battery housing. Source: Arata Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System," in *Re:CP*, ed. Cedric Price and Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 41.

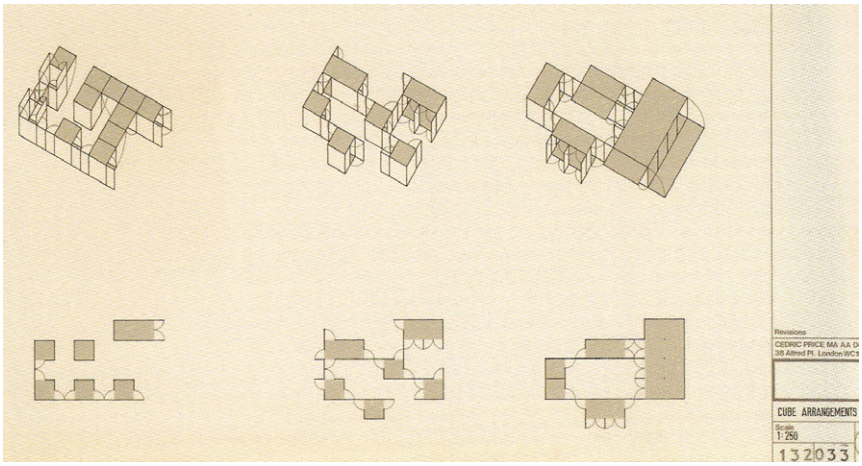

Figure 4.30. Source: Stanley Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price*, ed. Blanche Craig (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 248.

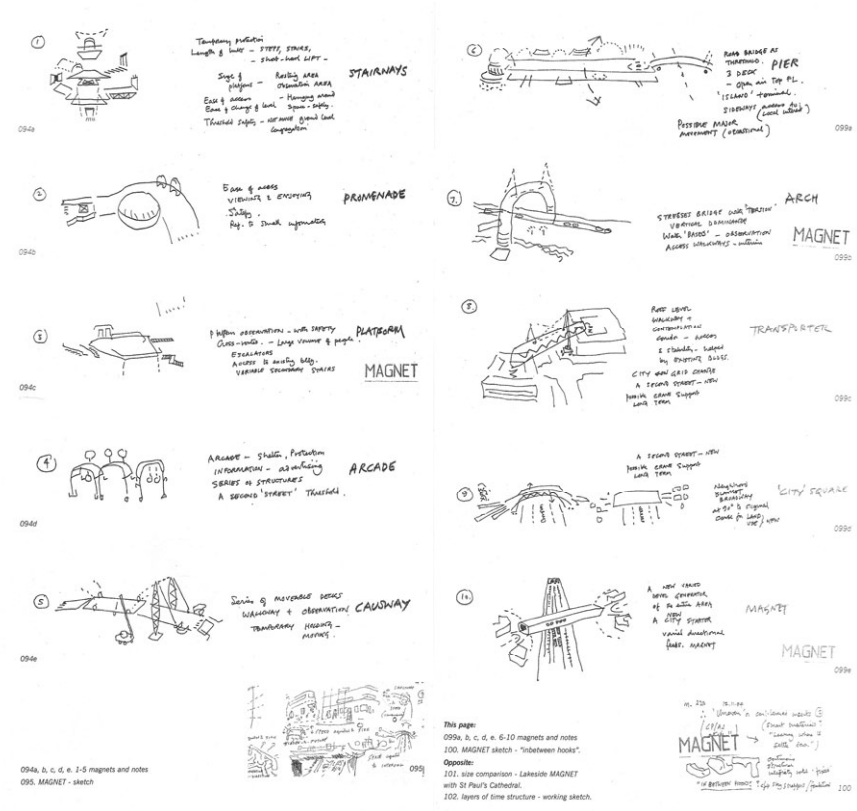

Figure 4.31 Magnet. Source: "220 Magnet", in *Cedric Price Opera*, ed. Samantha Hardingham (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2003), 98-99.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

> […] the architect's role should be to point out possibilities, not enforce manners of life. Thus the architect has scope for being a social force.[182]

Jarvie's remark on the social role of the architect compromises his "critical utopianism" with variability and flexibility. In this respect, his remark provides a pertinent conclusion for this thesis. Throughout this study, social imagination in a project of considerable flexibility has been reconsidered via patterns. The relation between the tools of examination (patterns) and the case project (Fun Palace) provided an interesting association due to their seeming discrepancy. It has been introduced that patterns, deduced from the re-definition of utopia, may be conceptualized as tools that guide the design process of projects with a social dimension. The inferences throughout the study render clearer why and how Fun Palace can be considered via patterns. Apparently, the common point making it possible (and abundantly provoking) to consider Fun Palace and patterns together is the enthusiasm for processing critical social dimension to utilize architecture as a social service. Approvingly, Mathews' remark on the design motivation of Price bridges social dimension to flexibility of use:

> Throughout his life and career, he remained committed to architecture as an instrument of social improvement. His motivation was consistently social: the emancipation and the empowerment of the individual.[183]

The definition of patterns as potential guidelines makes it necessary to reconsider the conception of utopia. The second chapter of the thesis thus elaborates on patterns and how they may guide productive use of social imagination. They are thus conceptualized as guidelines for the transformation from social imagination to project design.

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[182] Jarvie, "Utopian Thinking and the Architect," 22.

[183] Mathews, *From Agit-Prop to Free Space*, 257.

In order to commence a study on social imagination, one has to be informed about the context that renders the critique of social conditions necessary. In this respect, the post World War Two context of Britain also contributes to the significance of Fun Palace. Hence, the third chapter introduces the context of Fun Palace, including significant events that might have had effect on the architect. The rate of *change* and *variety in experiences of time and space* in the context are all seen to form important design factors, which trigger the arguments in the succeeding chapters. Furthermore, the origination of the project idea (the unification of leisure and learning) founds the relation between the project and its social context. This relation is significant for it helps conceiving how architecture can *communicate* socially. In other words, the relation between the context and the project illustrates the means by which architecture can support social arguments. Remarkably, the cultural impetus achieved under the postwar context is also important for it is still influential on cultural production in the present. Isozaki comments that Price's work is particularly significant from this aspect:

> […] as now the twenty-first century takes off directly from the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, Cedric's work will once again come to occupy a core position in new discourse.[184]

Furthermore, the idea of utilization of contemporary availabilities (i.e. technology, systems theory, etc.) in service of the social is a manifestation independent from their limitations. That is to say, rather than the extents that science and culture make available for use, the proper utilization of their potentials for serving social imagination is in the focus. In this respect, Price's Fun Palace differentiates from projects of "technocratic excess" and "formalistic excess" as it focuses on the social dimension, which Coleman defines as an advantage of "conceptualizing utopias as a gap in between existing conditions and renewed ones".[185]

Keeping in mind that the social dimension is at the focus, one feels an urge to inquire into the integration of the social dimension with project design. The fourth chapter begins with a brief remark of patterns and how they appear beneficial for analysis. This introductory discussion helps identifying patterns and to what extents they might be utilized to examine the project. Subsequently, the framework set at this discussion leads to the succeeding arguments on the design process of Fun Palace.

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[184] Isozaki, "Erasing Architecture into the System," 46.

[185] Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 89.

Hence, the project is examined under four hypothetical patterns regarding the design of program possibilities and physical structure. The initial set of patterns, concentrating more on the design of a "non-program", illustrates that the formulation of social imagination requires surpassing conventional conditions. In the case of Fun Palace, the patterns named as *blurring boundaries* and *processing activities* are intended to point out how the predestined conceptions can be overcome to introduce alternative visions. It is observed that the blurring of definitional boundaries makes it possible to inquire into acquiesces with a critical stance. Furthermore, the continuous reconsideration of social program proposals (i.e. *processing the activities*) is interpreted as a means to facilitate and sustain programmatic flexibility.

The subsequent patterns, *kit of programs* and *distortion of time*, also integrate the configuration of the physical structure to the argument on programmatic flexibility. As Ward clearly points out, flexibility "…can generate great economic and social value" if considered towards application.[186] In this sense, the *kit of programs* contributes to the argument by integrating theoretical programmatic organization with the issue of practicability. The inferences prove interesting for they point out to a generic design problem persistent in the present day: transformation of theoretical into practical without loss of essence. Fun Palace is extraordinarily relevant in this discussion, for its radical social programs are coupled by equally innovative architecture worked in production details.

Distortion of time, the last pattern studied, is concerned with time as a design factor, an argument followed by Price along his career.[187] Whereas the experience of time has changed dramatically (ironically by time) over the last five decades, the distortion of time continues to be a relevant subject in everyday experience. To remind, Price argues:

> […] while clothes, motorcars, forms of government, and wives [and husbands] are increasingly becoming objects of *limited periods of predilection*, we are still prepared to accept buildings and towns, not for the benefit of the user or for us, but for posterity; and we live in New York or London in spite of the buildings, not because of them.[188]

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[186] Ward, "Cedric Price: Projects '84-'02," 31.

[187] Obrist, "Interview with Cedric Price," 57.

[188] Price, "Response From the Architects," 287. Emphasis added.

The last section prior to the discussion part reconsiders the representations of the project. The representations, both promotional and architectural, constitute an essential aspect of Fun Palace. As the project has not been built, all debates regarding the potentials of Fun Palace are based on the project's representations. In the context of this thesis, representations of the project are reconsidered to illustrate key aspects of the inferences. In a more general sense, representations communicate the ideas of the project, and can therefore be considered primary references in considering the contribution of the project in contemporary context.

The contribution of Fun Palace to present architectural context can be observed most strongly in privileging *architecture as idea* over *architecture as built form* [189] As such, it can be argued that the potential influence of the project can be better understood program-wise. For instance, the improvisational and flexible experience highlighted in Fun Palace can be considered correspondent to Bernard Tschumi's arguments on event-space in the 1980s. Furthermore, the concepts introduced via patterns can be observed in the present day, such as program as the design objective, programmatic indeterminacy, "anti-architecture", hybridization ("gaps of uncertainty"), change, mobility, and temporality.

In arguing that a building is rather a strategy than an issue of architecture,[190] Rem Koolhaas significantly stands close to Price's conception of "anti-architecture" in service of variety in programmatic possibilities. In his book on Manhattan titled *Delirious New York*, Koolhaas identifies the random nature of the city life in the case of the skyscraper, which can contain various distinct programs, a phenomenon he terms as "cross-programming".[191] The case of "cross-programming", as illustrated by the golf course in an English garden on the seventh floor of a skyscraper, emphasizes that programmatic organization precedes architectural form. Koolhaas incorporates relative inferences from what he calls the "culture of congestion" – deduced from the social reality of the contemporary city– into design processes. Thus the architect's concern can be interpreted as understanding the complex relations within the social milieu, and formulating architecture to be flexible enough for "programmatic indeterminacy". He

[189] Lobsinger, "Cybernetic Theory and the Architecture of Performance," 134.

[190] Rem Koolhaas, "Goodbye to Hollywood", in *Content*. (Köln: Taschen, 2003), p118.

[191] For instance, see Koolhaas' definitions and arguments on The Downtown Athletic Club: Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*, (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994), 152-59.

approvingly appreciates Price's concern that the interpretation of the social realities should be the initial reference to guide design.[192]

While emerging from the examination of Fun Palace, the inferences from patterns can be reconfigured to facilitate further intellectual elaboration. These inferences may provide a potential to initiate and guide the integration of social imagination into other cases. A proper example is the "Fun Palace Berlin 200x" conference. "Fun Palace Berlin 200x" was launched on October 2004 by an international team of curators including Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Philipp Oswalt, Philipp Misselwitz and Stefan Rethfeld. The aim of the conference was to discuss alternative uses for the unoccupied East German Parliament, *Palast der Republik*. Although the physical structure of the old parliament is significantly different from Fun Palace, the social arguments of Fun Palace makes it possible to consider it as a model for *Palast der Republik*. In this respect, the conference is proof that the social enthusiasm of Fun Palace still initiates fresh ideas. Christy Lange notes about the conference:

> The starting-point for the discussion of the building's potential as a centre for cultural innovation was Cedric Price's Fun Palace (1961), the British architect's revolutionary, unrealized proposal for a 'pleasure laboratory'… Assuming that the Palast could be transformed into a laboratory for cultural innovation, it faces the same paradox that paralysed Price: how do you encourage participation without seeming to impose it? Price's meticulous planning and compulsive self-critique kept him from realizing his vision, a dilemma that Rem Koolhaas described as 'the paradox of the authoritarian insistence on liberation'.[193]

It would be seen in Lange's notes that the whole design process, including the failure to get the project built, initiates new questions to elaborate on. Reconsideration of project ideals via patterns possess the potential for revealing deeper design concerns, which may further facilitate and guide such questions. In this respect, utopian deviation might contribute to the discussions for the critical social arguments, while sustaining the aim of practice via patterns. Here, the thesis' intention is to inquire into the continual evolution of social imagination rather than simply describing Fun Palace. Hence, the inferences via patterns should be considered as part of an ongoing process of evaluative learning, which continues to reconfigure itself over time and experience (similar to the program proposals of Fun Palace).

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[192] Rem Koolhaas, introduction to *Re:CP*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist (Basel: Birkhauser, 2003), 6.

[193] Christy Lange, "Fun Palace Berlin 200x", *Frieze Magazine* 88 (February 2005), http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/fun_palace_berlin_200x/ (accessed 02 July 2009).

Evidently, Price's other projects such as Potteries Thinkbelt (1965), InterAction Centre (1974), Generator (1976), Magnet (1999), all can be interpreted as further elaborations on key concerns studied in the case of Fun Palace. Price's point on the influence of time on contemporary relevance readily illustrates his continuous reconsideration of design concerns. Samantha Hardingham explains in her introduction to *SuperCrit #1*:

> When we asked Cedric Price if he would consider presenting POTTERIES THINKBELT at … a Supercrit in 2003 he asked one question: 'what is the value of it now – what is useful about it now, for *you*?[194]

In the succeeding discussion, Hardingham explains that in the present context, the project should be considered neither as an "architectural polemic" nor an "architectural critique". She argues that the project is rather part of a continuous manifesto for education as well as "part of a manifesto on *mobility* and *change* that was explored through projects such as Air Structures Research (1963), Interaction (1974), Generator (1976) and Magnet (1999)".[195] Hence the description provided by Hardingham also supports the idea that the inferences of this thesis can be considered part of an ongoing research on these issues.

The social impetus of Fun Palace is also known to have influenced other projects. The most well known example is Centre Pompidou by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano. Located on a former car park on the *Plateau Beaubourg* in the historic center of Paris, Centre Pompidou (1977) was a competition project for a cultural center. The program included a museum of modern art, a reference library, center for industrial design and a center for music and acoustic research. The commissioning title of the project was "A Cultural Center for Paris."

The winning proposal by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano had changed the title to "A Live Center of Information and Entertainment,"[196] which clearly stated their intentions. With its program formulation and the structure made of a flexible framework of prefabricated parts, the project "clearly acknowledged debt to both Archigram and Cedric Price's Fun Palace project of

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[194] Samantha Hardingham, "Preview", in *Supercrit #1: Cedric Price, Potteries Thinkbelt*, eds. Samantha Hardingham and Kester Rattenbury (New York: Routledge, 2007), 11. Supercrit #1 is a series of conferences beginning on 5 November 2003 at University of Westminster. The conference focuses on Cedric Price's Works, particularly focusing on Potteries Thinkbelt Project.

[195] Ibid. Emphasis added.

[196] Richard George Rogers, *Richard Rogers Architects* (London: Academy Editions, 1985), 90.

1961".[197] What is considerably more important than the end product however is the way Rogers and Piano describe their conception of the program upon their submission, which in fact is suggestive of derivation from the social potentials presented in Fun Palace:

> It is our belief that buildings should be able to change, not only in plan, but in section and elevation, allowing people freedom to do their own things, the order and scale and grain coming from a clear understanding and expression of the process of building, and the optimization of each individual element, its system, of manufacture, storage, transportation, erection and connection, all within a clearly defined and rational framework. This framework must allow people to perform freely inside out, to change and adapt, in answer to technical or client needs, this free and changing performance becoming an expression of the architecture of the building.[198]

It would be recognized that the motives suggested in the competition entry text displays considerable affinity with the inferences made on Fun Palace in the fourth chapter. As a matter of fact, Mathews' argument that "The Fun Palace clearly provided a conceptual precedent and formal structure for the Centre Pompidou,"[199] has been approved by Rogers himself.[200] Although the resulting project borrows physical form of Fun Palace more than the program arguments, the project nevertheless can be considered as a move towards elaboration of the social potentials presented in Fun Palace.

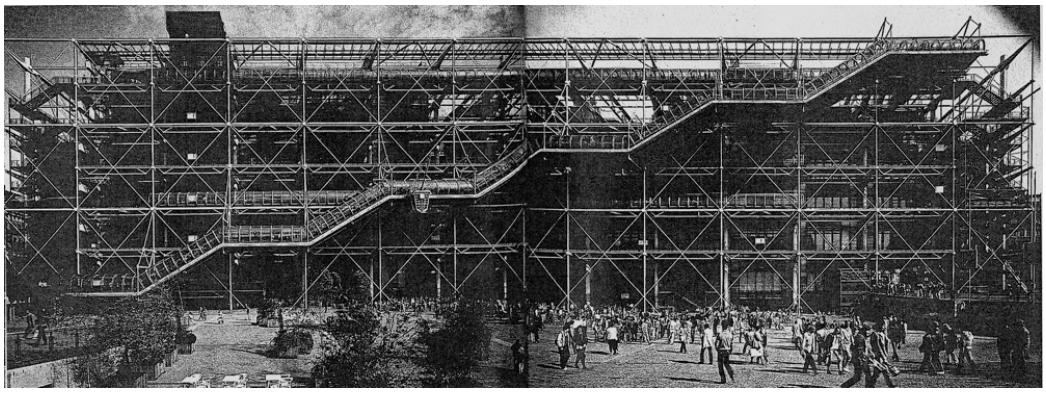

Figure 5.1 Centre Pompidou, Piazza Façade. Source: Kenneth Powell, *Richard Rogers*, (Zurich: Artemis, 1994), 46.

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[197] Deyan Sudjic, *The Architecture of Richard Rogers* (London: Fourth Estate, 1994), 26.

[198] Ibid.

[199] Mathews, "An Architecture for the New Britain," 304.

[200] Kenneth Powell, *Richard Rogers – Complete Works* (London: Phaidon, 1999), 94.

Hence one can examine a range of intellectual and practical activities initiated by the social imagination inherent in Fun Palace. The concern with the social dimension occurs as the main focus repeating in each case. Correspondingly, the arguments of the thesis are intended to examine how social imagination guides design. Although the inferences provide partial answers, the main goal is to set course for further elaboration on this subject. In this respect, elaboration via patterns can greatly contribute to one's understanding of the social potentials of design by encouraging participation in the reconsideration of projects. Such reconsiderations may easily lead to variety of discussions, as patterns can be reconfigured with changing conceptions of ideas. As patterns focus on the idea rather than the form, they make it possible to benefit from inferences while preventing formal limitations. In this sense, patterns may easily facilitate the reconsideration of social imagination, regardless of technical and formal limitations. Taken this way, elaboration via patterns can be seen as a continuous process of observation, interpretation, and reconfiguration.

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