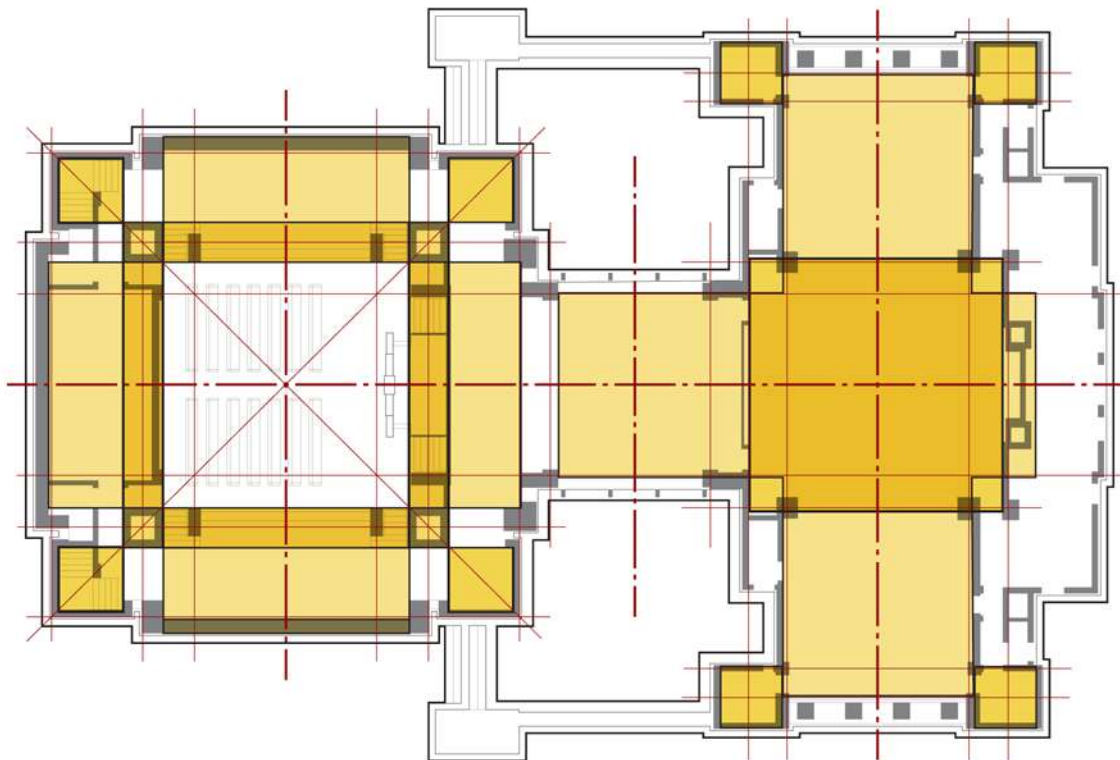


Diagramming the Big Idea

METHODS FOR ARCHITECTURAL COMPOSITION

SECOND EDITION

JEFFREY BALMER &
MICHAEL T. SWISHER



DIAGRAMMING THE BIG IDEA

Contents

Forward to the second edition – xi
Forward to the first edition – xiii
Acknowledgements – xvii

I – Setting the stage

1 – Introduction

- Read me first! – 1
- Why read this book? – 2
- What is architecture? – 3
- Organization, order, composition – 3
- Utility, function, purpose – 4
- Measure & matter – 5
- Design & method – 6
- Strategies & tactics – 6
- The structure of the narrative – 7
- The sequence of the chapters – 7
- The role of precedents – 9
- The point of departure – 10
- Glossary of terms – 11
- DETAILS 1 – ORDER & MEASURE
 - From the divine to the secular – 13
- DEMONSTRATION 1:1
 - Organizational figures – 17
- DEMONSTRATION 1:2
 - The courtyard schema – 19
- DEMONSTRATION 1:3
 - Courtyards as objects – 20
- DEMONSTRATION 1:4
 - Additional courtyard schemata – 22

2 – Sorting through ideas

- Diagrams as method – 25
- Diagram types – 26
- Diagramming & design education – 27
- Learning diagrammatic form – 28
- Gestalt sub-categories – 29
- The diagram & visual order – 29
- Our purpose – 30
- Glossary of terms – 32
- DETAILS 2 – THE ESSENTIAL HUT
 - Indigenous diagrams – 35
- DEMONSTRATION 2:1
 - Diagrams & contexts – 39
- DEMONSTRATION 2:2
 - Plan as diagram – 41

3 – Order first

- On order – 43
 - On measure – 45
 - Dividing the square – 46
 - Rules of engagement – 48
 - Positive & negative space – 50
 - Order & the orthogonal – 50
 - Glossary of terms – 53
 - DETAILS 3 – ORDER, ORIENTATION & THE ORTHOGONAL
 - The gridded city – 55
 - DEMONSTRATION 3:1
 - Gestalt defined – 59
 - DEMONSTRATION 3:2
 - Gestalt readings of basic form – 63
-

II – The first project set

4 – Design & drawing fundamentals

- On drawing – 71
- Relevance to design – 72
- Deriving order in drawing – 72
- Exercises in relational geometry – 73
- Defined & implied space – 74
- Analyzing the composition – 77
- Three variant compositions – 77
- Observing contrast, repetition, alignment & proximity – 79
- The variations considered – 79
- General observations – 80
- Motif, pattern & theme – 81
- Defined fields – 82
- Sorting through results – 85
- Implied fields – 87
- Adding fields – 88
- Combining fields – 89
- Summary – 90
- Glossary of terms – 91
- DETAILS 4 – THE COURTYARD
 - Figure-ground & solid-void – 93
- DEMONSTRATION 4:1:1
 - Figures & field in variation – 97
- DEMONSTRATION 4:1:2
 - Variation & elaborations – 98
- DEMONSTRATION 4:1:3
 - Variation & elaborations – 100
- DEMONSTRATION 4:2
 - Further variations – 102
- DEMONSTRATION 4:3
 - Contrast, repetition, alignment & proximity – 104

II – The second project set

5 – Building on proportion

- Object on a field – 111
- A figure in the relational field – 111
- Looking at the groups – 116
- Selecting & analyzing an aggregate composition – 117
- Adding to the quadrants – 118
- Two elements – 118
- Refining the figures – 122
- Observing the new figures – 122
- Observing the new group – 123
- Glossary of terms – 125
- DETAILS 5 – FIGURES & FIELDS
 - Objects & space – 127
- DEMONSTRATION 5:1
 - Regulating lines dividing space – 131
- DEMONSTRATION 5:2
 - Figures & their construction – 134
- DEMONSTRATION 5:3
 - Field, grain & path – 138

6 – Conventions in design

- Drawing in the third dimension – 143
- Adding fields & overhead planes – 144
- Turning the grid – 148
- Reading the section – 148
- A final model – 152
- Glossary of terms – 155
- DETAILS 6 – AXIS & PATH
 - Lines, planes & volumes – 157

III – The third project set

7 – Starting in three dimensions

- Design on a grid – 163
- The site – 164
- Three figures – 164
- Spatial models – 166
- Volume, form & space: an example – 167
- Visualizing connection with constructed axes – 169
- The gestural nexus – 169
- Spatial hierarchy: field grain & path – 174
- Clarifying plan elements – 176
- The new grid – 176
- Strategy set – 176
- Tactical definitions & variations – 177
- A final remark – 178
- Glossary of terms – 180
- DETAILS 7 – SPATIAL SYSTEMS
 - Frames, planes & cells – 181
- DEMONSTRATION 7-1
 - Axial volumes – 185
- DEMONSTRATION 7-2
 - Additional composition models – 186

8 – Models & diagrams

- More complex approaches to strategies – 191
- Strategy definitions – 191
- Tactical themes & variations – 192
- Tactics expanded – procedure & results – 193
- Three-dimensional diagrams – 196
- Combined diagram models – 200
- Planning the final model – 206
- Fragments models – 207
- The final model – 209
- Conclusion – 213
- Glossary of terms – 214
- DETAILS 8 – THRESHOLD & BOUNDARY
 - Containment & connection – 215
- DEMONSTRATION 8-1
 - Axial volumes – 219
- DEMONSTRATION 8-2-1
 - Alternate tactical diagrams – 220
- DEMONSTRATION 8-2-2
 - Additional hybrid tactical diagrams – 222
- DEMONSTRATION 8-3
 - Demonstration model – 224
- DEMONSTRATION 8-4
 - Demonstration drawings – 226
- DEMONSTRATION 8-5-1
 - Assembly images – 228
- DEMONSTRATION 8-5-2
 - Alternate model #1 – 230
- DEMONSTRATION 8-5-3
 - Alternate model #2 – 232

IV – Precedents

9 – Precedent diagrams in two dimensions

- Introduction – 235
- Two concepts – 235
- Two expressions – 236
- Two dimensions – 236
- Two projects – 237
- House with Three Courts – 237
- The Danteum – 246
- Glossary of terms – 252
- DETAILS 9 – WHAT AN ARCHITECT SEES
 - Margaret Esherick house – 255

10 – Precedent diagrams in three dimensions

- Introduction – 261
- Representing the third dimension – 262
- Phillips Exeter Academy Library – 263
- Unity Temple – 271
- Diagram as generator – 276
- Glossary of terms – 277
- DETAILS 10 – THE LANGUAGE OF COLOR
 - Color as a subject – 279
 - Glossary of color terms – 289

V – Resources

- Master glossary of terms – 292
- Index – 301