

SUSANNE ZOTTL  
ARCHITECTURE

**SCI-ARC VICO**

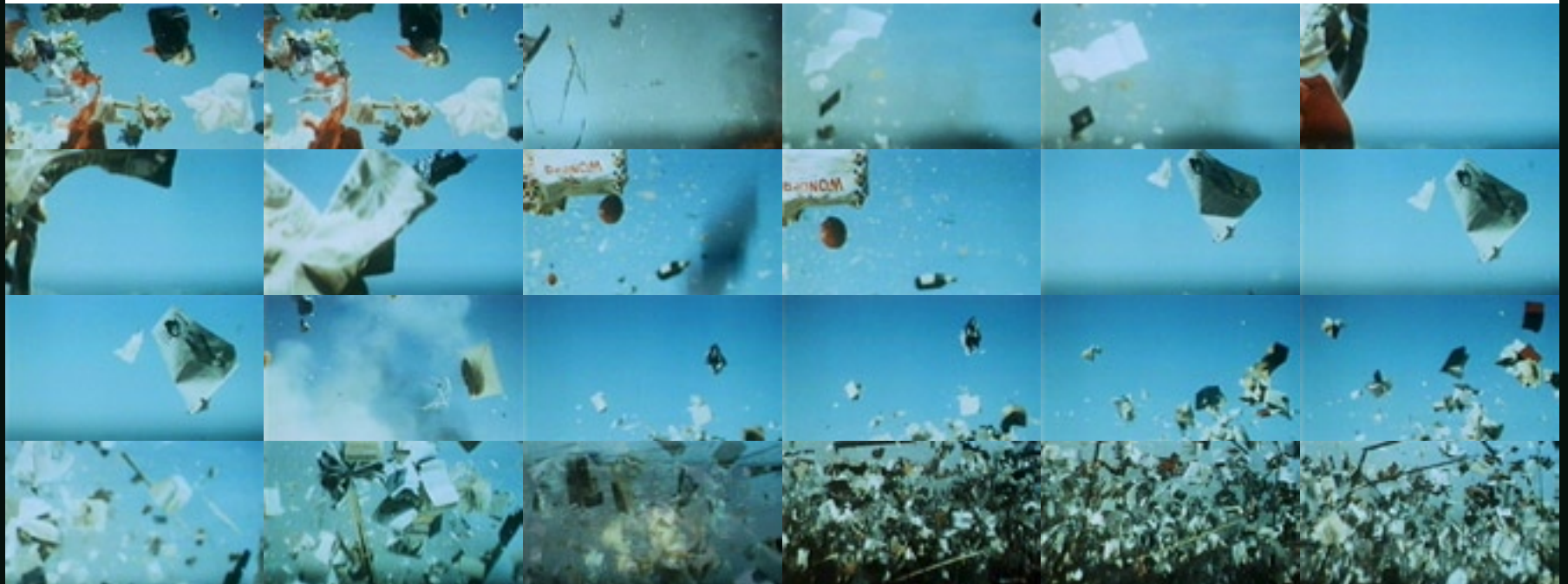
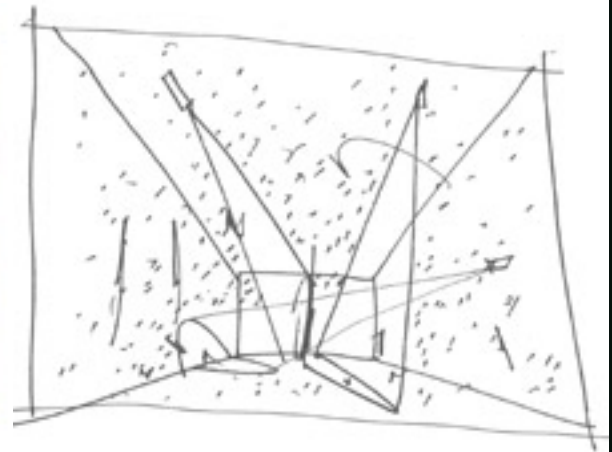
VISITING PROFESSOR SPRING TERM 2005

VICO MORCOTE, SWITZERLAND

**THIRD YEAR 3A**

Excerpt from the movie Zabriskie point

2005



# SCI-ARC VICO

VISITING PROFESSOR SPRING TERM 2005  
VICO MORCOTE, SWITZERLAND  
THIRD YEAR 3A  
2005

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The topic of this semester focussed on the study, observation and interpretation of found conditions. The main project is situated in Vienna/Austria, a city, that can be understood as a conglomerate of its history and inhabitants. Building within this complex structure is asking for a set of „tools“ and capacities from the designer. One of them being the high alertness and sensitivity to what is already there (existing buildings, history, inhabitants, found objects,...). Consequently, all the steps the design goes through, continue the story of the site and have equally to be taken into consideration. The nature and specifics of the site and the task unveil step by step. The rest remains in the dark. In a short project, the students approached the topic in an abstract exercise:  
These are the components that can be discerned while approaching the project:

1. Homenaje a San Juan de la Cruz / Eduardo Chillida
2. Roderick Usher (The Fall of the House of Usher, Edgar Allan Poe), whose malady is described as such:  
„ He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odours of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.“
3. Excerpt from the movie Zabriskie point

These components had to be studied, interpreted and set in relation to each other. Every step is documented by a description (story) and/or an illustration of the path (story board). Finally we ended up with an object/model, that merges the different qualities. The object bears formal and functional contents, that further guided us through the design process of the semester.

The main project is the „remodeling“ of what a big fire in August 2001 left from the Sofiensäle in the third district of Vienna.

## 1. THE ANALYSIS

## 2. THE PROGRAM

The Sofiensäle were originally built as a Russian steam-bath. They witnessed various changes of use. We investigated in the question, what kind of bath we would build these days. In order to find that out, we looked at different types of baths. These analyses formed the base for our project.

The following baths were analysed:

- The Gellért Bath / Budapest
- The Amalienbad / Vienna
- The Thermes of Caracalla / Rome
- The Sandunovskiye Bani / Moskow
- The Bath Spa / Bath (N. Grimshaw)
- The Thermal Baths Vals / Vals (P. Zumthor)
- The Cagaloglu Hamami / Istanbul
- The Oedo Onsen Monogatari / Tokyo
- The Roman Baths Aquae Sulis / Bath

## 3. LOCATION WITHIN THE CITY

The site is situated in the third district, east of the historic center of the City of Vienna and close to an

important junction for public transportation - Landstraße, Wien Mitte. The „Sofiensäle“, the ruins of which are situated on this site, were destroyed by a serious fire on August 16, 2001. The distance to the very center of the city - St. Stephan's Cathedral - is 1 km (= 0,62 miles). Situated in a very dense urban context, there are few open spaces around the site. The Vienna Stadtpark is situated in a distance of 500 m (= 0,31 miles), the Vienna Prater is situated in a distance of 800 m (= 0,5 miles) from the site. The site can be reached by means of public (municipal railway, subway, trams, busses) and individual transport.

#### **4. SIZE AND LIMITS**

The surface of the area is about 7.000 m<sup>2</sup> (= 75.350 square feet). The neighborhood is characterized by its dense urban structure - which consists mainly of housing blocs - and its lack of urban diversity.

#### **5. LAND USE AND MASTER PLAN**

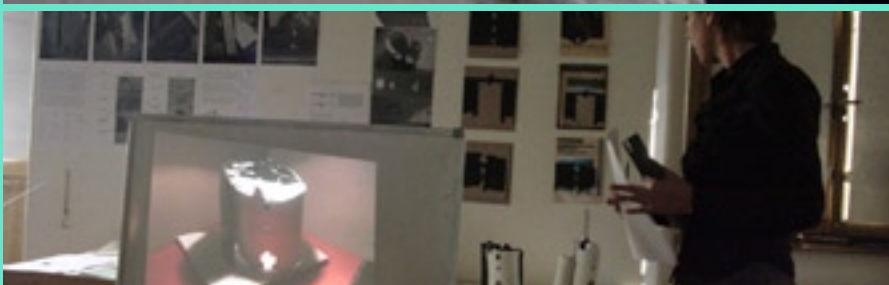
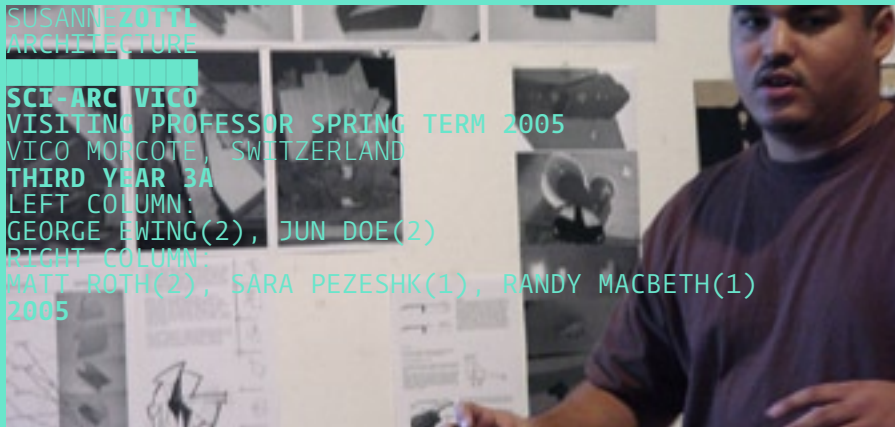
Due to the fire of 2001 the area of the Sofiensäle is currently waste land. The remains of the historic buildings are mainly the loadbearing walls. The Main Hall in particular was destroyed seriously in the fire: The roof structure - which was the first big steel construction in Vienna and covered a surface of 48 x 18 m (= 157 x 59 feet) - was completely destroyed. The buildings on this bloc are 5-6 floors high (18-23 m / = 59-75 feet) and are mainly residential buildings. The street levels of the buildings Marxergasse 15 and Seidlgasse 17-19 are used for restaurants/cafés. The neighboring blocs resemble this structure in heights and uses. The blocs situated North and East of the site are significantly lower than the ones situated West and South (- 32 m / = 105 feet).

#### **6. THE TASK**

The site of the Sofiensäle and what was left from the historic buildings, witnessed a complex history from being used as a Russian steam-bath, a concert-hall and a ballroom, a center for political events to an event-center. The fire of 2001 could, according to the owner, have ended this story. The fact, that the ruins still remain as a listed building, ask for a continuation of the story of the Sofiensäle. Looking at the complex history of the site and the building, taking the site's position within the city and the neighborhood into consideration, imagining a structure, that would provide public as well as very private space, that would improve the at present one-dimensional, not diverse use of the area, the students were asked to design a public bath on the site of the Sofiensäle, incorporating the listed remains of the building. The program was based on the analyses of public baths. The building itself was developed through its contents and its historic and formal characteristics. It appears to be an agglomeration of these components. Its quality derives from the inner structure, the relation of the sequence of spaces inside and the space that remains in between them.

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LEFT COLUMN:  
GEORGE EWING(2), JUN DOE(2)  
RIGHT COLUMN:  
MATT ROTH(2), SARA PEZESHK(1), RANDY MACBETH(1)  
2005



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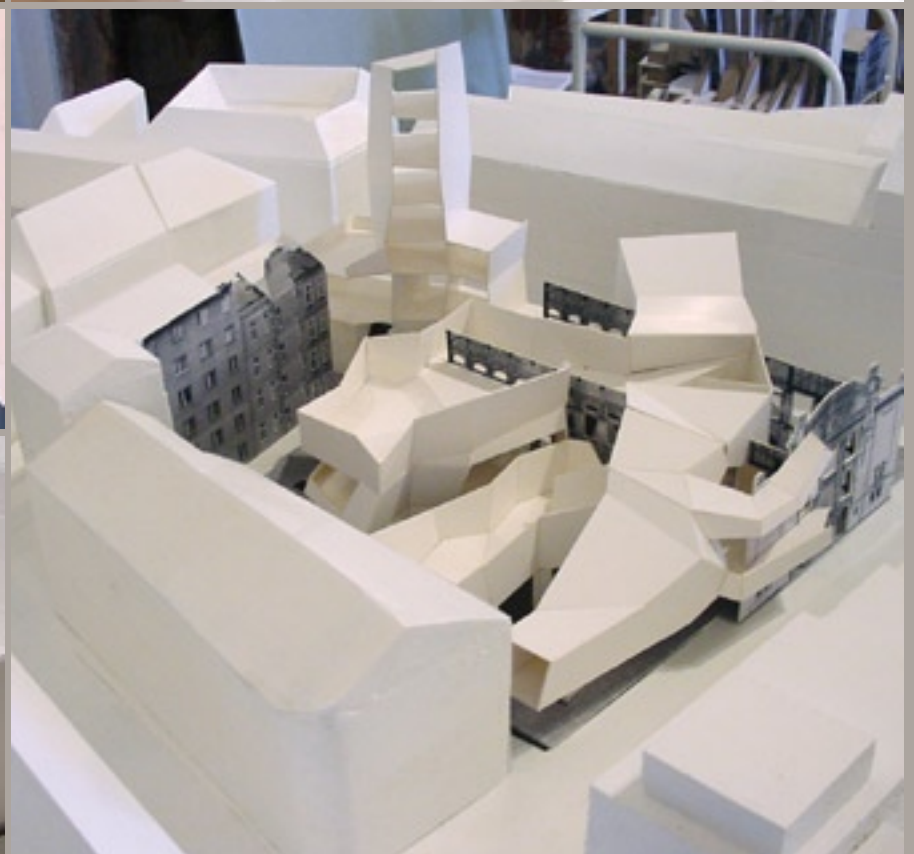
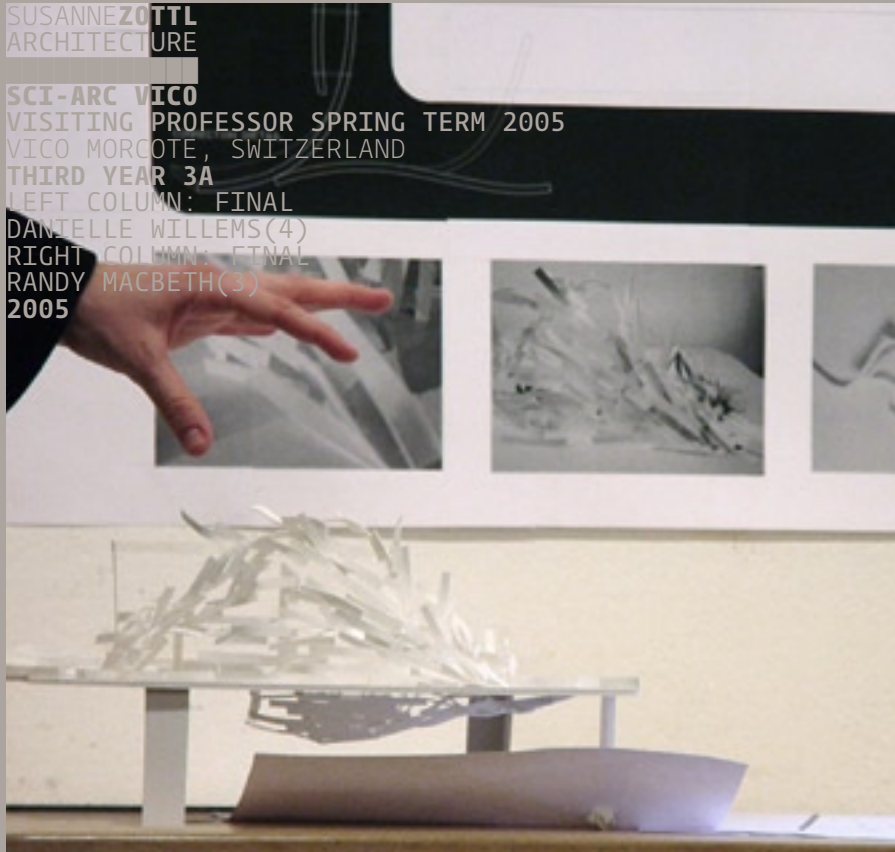
SCI-ARC VICO  
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LEFT COLUMN: ANALYSIS  
RIGHT COLUMN: FINAL  
GEORGE EWING(4)  
2005



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LEFT COLUMN: FINAL  
DANIELLE WILLEMS(4)  
RIGHT COLUMN: FINAL  
RANDY MACBETH(3)  
2005



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LEFT COLUMN: FINAL

JUN DOE(3)

MIDDLE COLUMN: FINAL

MIKE DAVISSON(2), JAVIER MALESPIN (1)

RIGHT COLUMN: FINAL

MATT ROTH(1), SARA PEZESHK(1), DAVE MOORE(1)

2005

