KEITH EVAN GREEN
Student Design Work
Citadel - A Precise Anomaly

Over a five week term, students were asked to design an alternative to Auckland's *Visitor Information Centre* on its current downtown site adjacent to Auckland Town Hall on Aotea Square.
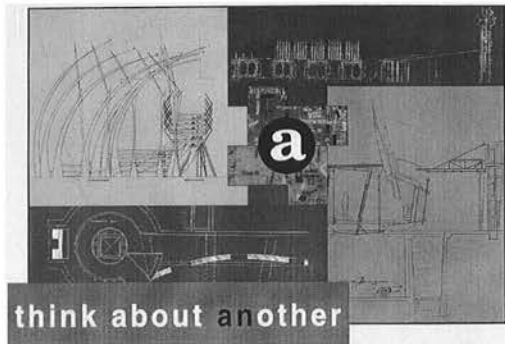
> *What is a "visitor's center "? What is "Auckland"? How can a building help to define a place ? How can one account for the vital transformations in the other ?*

At the outset of the Italian Renaissance, Leon Battista Alberti encountered similar complications when describing the citadel. He explained that while the citadel was initially "a place of piety and religion," it soon became "one of cruelty and excess." For Alberti, the citadel was an anomaly, a place which was "neither inside nor outside the town" - one defined alternatively as a "pinnacle of the whole world or lock of the city." "In short," he wrote, "a citadel should be conceived and built like a small town." Following from the complications presented by Alberti's suggestion, members of the studio were asked to reflect upon the *situation* of both "Auckland" and it's "Visitor's Centre".
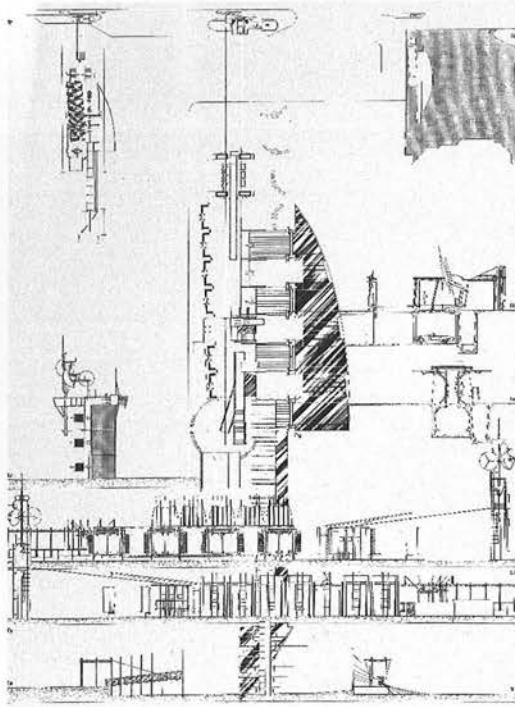
For this studio, I proposed a particular "tactic" which might serve as an economical vehicle for pondering the particulars of the architectural situation, to discourage the abstruse and long-winded diatribes sometimes invented or appropriated, without discrimination, by students of architecture. Members of the studio were thus asked to conceive their "visitors center" and "citadel" following from an *oxymoron*, a written figure consisting of just two words set in a tense relationship which might represent their unique vision of the city of Auckland.

Conceived by the studio, an architectural advertisement for public display and reaction.

In this way, "Auckland" and "Visitor's Centre" were defined in the projects shown here as a "fragmented collective" and a "responsible deception". While arriving at their figurative representations of the City, students wondered whether "Auckland" might be mythical or real, whether "Auckland" is a past, present and/or future, and how "Auckland" might feel, taste, and smell.

At the outset of the studio, each member of the studio conceived his or her own oxymoron and presented this along with five graphic images that demonstrated it. Thereafter, members of the studio worked to develop a precise, *anomalous* architecture following from their oxymoronic conception of "Auckland" and "Visitor's Centre". The discovery of this *anomalous* citadel was represented with the *utmost precision* in drawings.

RESPONSIBLE DECEPTION
Nick Melrose, Fifth Year Student

The Visitor's Centre can never fully define the vitality of Auckland as a systematic, static phenomenon. At best, the Centre acknowledges this difficulty and proposes to *responsibly deceive* the visitor. As in the city itself, the visitor to the Centre is required to navigate his or her way through an ever-changing landscape of images, offered as electronic information by instruments which themselves define the interior space of this public place.

While the historical centers of Europe might be described as a collective form, Auckland's is relatively fragmented. But the city, as an ever-transforming situation, inherently has something of both the fragmented and the collective.
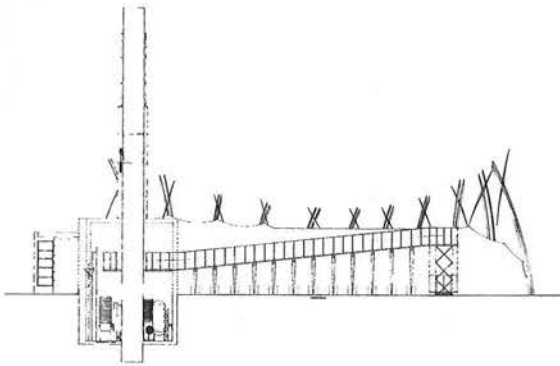
FRAGMENTED COLLECTIVE
Melinda Trask, Third Year Student

Auckland and it's Visitor's Centre is here described as a *fragmented collective*. Visitors enter the Centre through an oscillating passageway that brings them to a cylindrical volume, a "pin". Here, across a reception desk, the visitor meets a worker who can obtain the desired printed information about the City. This information is retrieved from the walls of the cubic volume, essentially composed of leaflets. The elevator tower is accessible only to the worker, who can descend to an underground level to retrieve additional leaflets, or ascend to survey the situation of the City. After the encounter with the worker, the visitor exits through a linear passage and returns to Auckland, somehow changed.