<u>Architecture Show</u>

<u>Volume I</u>

<u>Architecture Now</u>
(2017)

by Jordan Valdina

Key Life

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A Key Life Video Outreach Series

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I'm Jordan Valdina. I'm a Registered Architect and a Professional Engineer. Designing spaces and connecting people to places they love is what I do. Using the material in this program, my hope is that I may inspire and provide value to you in your journey through our built environment. This is the Architecture Show.

1. **What is Architecture**

Hello and welcome to the Architecture Show. It's not the only architecture show. It's just one, but I find the use of the word "the" a little more pleasing. In fact it's probably the reverse of being The architecture show because it's very conversational, very informal in a sense, but by no means disconnected from the actual practice. It's certainly actually connected to the reality of these things, but talking about them very person to person, very off the cuff, very conversational. Lay person terms? You could call it that. More importantly it's just conversational, including subjective perceptions that I have of things for whatever value that might be. There's certainly plenty of technical literature and content out there, of course actual accredited degrees, professional continuing education. There are as deep levels as you want to go with it really, which is one of the exciting things about architecture: it's a continual learning.

Here come some emergency service vehicles now. Regulations speak to accommodating emergency access, vehicular access, to varying levels, sizes, degrees, numbers, width of the truck, the turn around. Land use regulations under zoning generally speak to those requirements.

And so a great launch point into the way everything is in our built environment is really considering architecture, and all it connects to. It's not divorced from engineering and planning and urban planning and interior design and landscape architecture and the different branches of engineering and the construction trades and the business within which it all happens. It's just a point of focus, like all of these sectors, all of these roles and trades and services and professionals. All represent of course a particular focus that then contributes to producing all this, which is us living, making a living, etc. There's really no part of the built environment that architecture does not address, just it focalizes by default around the building, the actual building structure.

But there's nothing about architecture per se that says that can't then relate to designing something that is artistic, often in the form of the building, but the building is a big sculpture, in so many words, while it has very structural

and accessible accommodations of various functions. And yet it's a three dimensional work that can be taken to more artistic levels that often relate to the budget of the project and equally importantly, and often more importantly, to the priorities of the client generally wanting something on the scheme of things normal, maybe with a flourish (but that's a general context of buildings), or whimsical, or avant-garde, or really artistic. So that's all possible. It's just not your everyday project.

All these things are the built environment, and they're how we think about the built environment. And architects hold that post, if you will, of "I'll help you design, align, orchestrate" the construction of the built environment, and specializing of course in what we refer to as architecture: it's buildings. But again there are aspects of say a guardrail that could be architecture, even though normally that would be an engineer designing that. And if there were a need there could be an aspect for example of a rock formation leading up to a house that also gets addressed by the architect.

Or the interposition of elements that relate to but are still of the built environment like, depending on your perspective, I'd say very elegantly the nice big simple slab cantilevering over on Fallingwater by Frank Lloyd Wright, not to name somebody who is named all the time. But there's a reason a lot of these people who are named all the time are, and it's often because they've done things that when you really sit and you really connect with it, you realize are really great. Just how much and in what way, that's your taste, that's your preference.

So this is just conversationally about what architecture is. It's thinking about, designing, and helping to implement, so in this day and age it's not necessarily managing the construction, but rather at least providing a real design.

Now architecture itself, the actual word, has become a professionally controlled term, in a normal context anyway, to mean somebody who is licensed in the profession of architecture. And to do so, they had to meet very specific standards, degrees, number of years in practice under a licensed professional, and number of areas in which they performed that practice and what they learned to then be allowed to take a number of tests, all of which they have to pass, to then pay the relevant organization. Once they say "yes we recognize you've passed that test", to then say "OK here's my certification fee," to then get your actual certification. That person is then practicing architecture. What they do by definition is architecture.

But then there is the more subjective and more human and artistic and conceptual essence of the word "architecture" where you could go, "They're licensed as an architect, but what they're doing isn't worthy of the word 'architecture'." So now you're harkening to something beyond. Or somebody who's not licensed, certainly equally possible, hopefully more possible than the licensed Architect not doing their job is somebody who's not licensed who designs something, and you go "That is a really great design. In fact, that is a work of architecture if you're the one behind that design." Legally however it could be called architecture, but what that person did to produce it couldn't be called architecture in most jurisdictions because it is a legally controlled professional term. So they weren't practicing architecture, but they could have created a work of architecture, by definition or by concept essence to be a high compliment, or at least something that designates a certain level of orchestration of three dimensional form, the building, the built environment, and all connected: materials, surfaces, lighting, soundscape, how you relate to your environment, what it feels like to be in this house, in this building, whatever it is, in which room, and why. All those things, all of that stuff is architecture.

Now it can't exist divorced from the technical understanding of the various systems that an architect orchestrates. But an architect indeed on the scheme of things design and specifies, yet a large measure of it is orchestration because it goes beyond their direct area of expertise. But their direct area of expertise is to sit in a position of coordinating the other areas of expertise in so far as they support the design and construction of the built environment. So normally an architect would not design the mechanical system if it was something of any real complexity, even a very basic level in a residence generically speaking, even if maybe they could; it's not their thing they're focusing on every day. Get an engineer to do that, or a contractor under design-build for smaller projects or projects that allow it, electrical systems likewise. Though an architect will propose where lighting goes and may, according to the building department in the jurisdiction, have to show a compliant electrical plan with a sufficient number of outlets that meet code. Or he or she might be able to pass that off to the installer, the electrical contractor to meet code and to get their electrical inspection.

Architecture comes to the edge of all these things and may or may not embrace them in total. It does embrace in total the layout and dimensionality and fundamental basic structure for life safety, protection of public health, safety and the environment, protection of life, in the buildings, and in the associated to and from the buildings: stairs and the like. It's in their purview

directly. Structure as gets a little more complicated very well could bring on a structural engineer.

So we talked about mechanical, electrical, structural. Sub-areas or related areas that are mechanical are specifically heating, cooling and ventilating – HVAC: heating, ventilation and air conditioning. There is plumbing engineering which might be needed on a certain scale of building, but not others because the plumber could do it, again, design-build on smaller residential where it often may be allowed, according to the residence. Fire protection, which is a relative of plumbing for sure, but it's designated in its own realm. It could just be a bunch of pipes with water and sprinkler heads. On the other hand, there are dry-activated systems. There are all sorts of things that are in the purview of fire protection.

So, plumbing, fire protection, electrical, security systems, entertainment systems, data network systems, various more specialized engineering, acoustical design, some architects specialize in that. But often there's an acoustical designer, or there could be an acoustical engineer.

That's just an in-a-nutshell view of what an architect is and what an architect does. And the basis of understanding their value is they are accountable by law. This is the legal, professionally certified version of it. The one outside of that might have been a little more loosey-goosey, but in effect it's the same thing: "by hiring you, I know I'm going to get a building that works and that I like, or that works better and that I like more than untrained people trying to do this." For those who don't have enough experience with good architecture and what an architect does, the value might be a little more mysterious, depending somebody's own proclivity for designing space or knowing a builder who they appreciate their design sense. But generally somebody who has seen building after building built understands very well that by having this role of somebody specialize in the design from a perceptual perspective all the way to life safety, protection of property, code compliance, etc., and to whatever level assisting in the support, the back support, not picking up a hammer but the coordinating efforts, and the checking things over efforts, and the re-considerations as things come up, and the budgeting support, depending on the project, that there is real value worth its weight for paying an architect to do that. And generally there's a legal requirement for most building projects that you have one or an engineer that is specifically licensed and accepted to specialize for their level of competence to be able to design the building in question. But generically speaking of course the building design is by an architect.

So that's just a little bit about the profession, the field, what it is. In very broad stroke overview, architecture is design of the built environment and specifically buildings and things directly connected to them, and the orchestrator of the process of getting whatever additional professional services brought to the table to fulfill that design to its project appropriate level of specification, all the way down to the last screw if the project warrants it, via the sub-consultants to the architect and the architect. And then to again, to whatever degree the project warrants it, support budgeting, design concept considerations, working on even articulating the design in the first place, something an architect helps with, helping to administer, observe, provide feedback or a more active role in the construction project without actually doing the construction: that in the modern day sense is architecture.

1. **<u>What is Architecture</u>** - *Special Edition*

There's this notion: the construct is the architecture. It's mentally applied after the fact over the infrastructure, if you will, of nature and what we are. But is that really the best definition? I mean when you look at all the things that are here already and all around, and you think about the things people do and try to do in architecture, can you really say that what we're doing is that much better, so much as different and certainly tailored to people? There must be something, is there something, more? Well, there's a focus in any case, and that is controlled, controlled to work with the specific needs and dimensions of function, again generally for people. But clearly that's not the only thing architecture is. However that's generally how it expresses, and most of the rules and formulas and things we figure out are based around achieving that very simple and yet practically somewhat tricky end. Like look at the base of this column: probably moisture issues and just a simple connection of how something was sawn. It's all part of architecture, all that nitty gritty.

One could say it's specifically in the taking of these raw materials, if you will, and patterns in nature all around us and translating it and streamlining it and adjusting it to create a purposeful statement crafted consciously.

And the essence of architecture rightly could be said to exist outside of and kind of preliminary in the pieces that we then can put together to build architecture. And in this way it could also be said to have been with us forever because it's in the essences of how we think, how we consider and observe and find patterns.

So these patterns have been with us, around us, outside of us, between us, again, as long as one may care to contemplate.

And it's actually in the noticing simplified patterns in the greater pattern and how they can work to the ends of our making a statement and again controlling space to what is on the scheme of things very simplistic needs and then rebuilding on that simple basis to become more artful and subtle in the integration with all these things.

Then there's this concept of architecture that relates to like a social status and a level of talent and proficiency and grandeur that is beyond most. You know, it's a pinnacle event. And in reality, however, there is no pinnacle (and this is a fundamental lesson of architecture) that is not built on a very solid functional, and in that sense non-pretentious in the least, base, as I hope these opening images are highlighting.

Which is to say, wherever you are is where architecture begins. Whatever you know is where architecture begins. You'll often hear people saying "I wanted to do something with architecture, but I'm not good at ..." they often say "math." That's absurd. You should do it if you love it. The big warning is doing it because you want a level of recognition. That's the rocky shore that many hopes are dashed against, because in reality to produce architecture is akin to stacking thousands and thousands of blocks, year after year after year. But how is a big grand piece built? Well in essence we just said it.

It starts from the ground up, and it stacks. But that little cart, that's architecture too. So is this little guy. Here you see some more traditional architecture in proportionality, gestures, and then old on top, a little modern expression on the side. OK that's not architecture right? No, that's definitely architecture, and as a matter of fact so are the cars. No that's design, yeah. And there we have another of the old cool water towers, and an airplane passing through the clouds, and you know it's like that's engineering. The water tower is engineering. The little parking thing is engineering. The building is architecture. The cars are design, not architecture. And none of that stuff of course is really quite true: there's a total merger of these elements. And one of the things with the specialization largely following from industrialization, it all kind of went together societally, is the efficiency of specialization and also the absolute ignorance of separatization of what is not.

Nothing exists separately from this, the economy, because all buildings need a budget, all buildings need resources, and all buildings need operation resources and maintenance. So the economic aspect is very real. And architecture, if anything, if someone could say certain simpler things are just design, architecture definitely warrants, you know "hey is that comprehensive enough in it's thinking, putting it all together?" Ah, now, now there's an architect. So if you build something that's going to fall over tomorrow, is it architecture? Well, only if you did so on purpose.

While it's not literally in the written definition, if you will, of architecture to be humanitarian or to care in some context, if it doesn't, can it really be said

to be the architecture it claims to be, and not one of duplicity? Duplicity, by the way, in physical fact fails. Which is interesting to consider if there are parallels in the moral or social or economic or other spheres.

Is architecture, should it be, can it be or always must it have a component that could be looked at as holy or sacred or at least truly essential?

2. **Why Hire an Architect**

One of the questions with involving an architect really is why. This day and age, a lot of people do it, for smaller projects at least, just because they need it by law to get their building permit to allow them to, say, have an addition or make changes to their house or adjust the configuration of an existing building a little bit so they can sell food items out of the front, or something. And they need a licensed professional. Generally with buildings it's an architect, however not always. Certain engineering disciplines, potentially a civil engineer for example, may be granted the right, by the particular jurisdiction you're in, to design buildings. Sometimes people hire engineers under the guise of they are just able to assess the basics, instead of to impose. And again that's in someone's perception of course, that there could be an imposition of a design style or a flourish perhaps that an architect would find value in, that an owner or builder would find extravagant, inappropriate, not fitting, etc. So, given that this is the architecture show, let's look at why hire an architect.

Now, a good architect will encompass the realms of engineering as well, the basics as referred to before: the code compliance, life safety issues, structural. And when it goes beyond their expertise in the specific areas, like calculating the appropriateness of a specific beam or a floor joist, but something that's perhaps less common, more outside the standard expertise of an architect, they may bring on an engineer as a sub-consultant, generally is the basis of doing that. The same is true of any system of the built environment: mechanical systems, meaning generally heating and cooling systems or ventilating (HVAC: heating, ventilation and air conditioning). That's the realm of most mechanical systems. Electrical systems, you know, if it's a basic lighting layout and showing where outlets are and switches and maybe a couple data jacks, that generally would fall under the purview of an architect if they were hired to do so. However, detailed electrical specifications, more complex systems, might involve bringing on actually an electrical engineer.

So, mechanical, electrical, and same holds true if there are particular requirements, whether by the state or just by the nature of the design complexity, that require special expertise in the given area of design and or

engineering, fire protection, sprinkler systems or other fire protection systems, plumbing systems, again if they're more complex.

However, the architect sits in the role of coordinator, generally, of the design project as a whole, coordinating the technical and the engineering sub-consultants, and in that regard, acting as the owner's or the client's, or the developer's sometimes, as their representative and their help, if you will. They're safe guarding the integrity of that design in regards to, often, the contractor, because each party has naturally different interests.

Now, why hire the architect. Legally, because it might be required to get your permit. But before that, what was the value in an architect? Well, it was somebody who actually knew how to design the built environment, as we call it, generically speaking should know anyway, better than people who don't focus in the discipline. It makes a lot of sense, and yet the commonality, the fact that we experience ourselves, our built environment every day, our houses, the layout of space that we like individually, sort of can seem a fuzzy boundary of is there really a real expertise here. "Really what I need is the engineering for how to make the house stand up, to make sure it stands up, and at that I don't want too much," because people often characterize engineers as oversizing things. Of course, that's not exactly the case. And like anything somebody has to be good at what they do to justify what they do as having value. That's a given. So this is not about people being incompetent because an incompetent builder, likewise, is not to make the case for when to hire a builder by looking at what if somebody can't do it right.

The good thing about a licensed profession, like architecture or engineering, is that the fact that they've obtained their license isn't, like nothing is, an ultimate assurance. It's not an ultimate assurance. But it's as close as we can reasonably get by requiring an accredited degree from a recognized institution of learning, an approved path of practice under other licensed professionals for various amounts of time in various areas, and then passing generally a battery of tests, that almost entirely ensure that that person is competent to do what it is they're doing. There are exceptions, and there are people who because of their character might try to do a shortcut or something. That's possible, but that falls in the realm of anybody who does not have integrity, whether it's a builder, an architect, or a homeowner for that matter pretending they have money they don't, or whatever; make up the scenario. So this can't be about that. This is about people who legitimately know about what they're doing.

So again, it's hard to sometimes see the value, for some people. Generally, smaller projects, homeowners, residential work or people who don't have prior experience with development, more than others, are likely to question why does it take what it takes. "Maybe I could do a little simple sketch." It's a little hit or miss. Like any time one is venturing into an area of expertise, you might have a natural talent in it, but you might not realize some of the things that somebody of course who's well versed in the art would realize. And they are very specific nitty gritty type things that come up, besides just general design sense, which is very important and easy to actually mess up and think you're getting right and then be in the space and not like it. And that's a litmus test of the quality of the experience of the space.

We have the elements of the subjective side, that then on sort of a continuum get to the more objective in regards to successfully ensuring things that meet code, which is there to protect life safety, and protect property. So, a qualified architect is not going to get in the way of your design; they are going to facilitate that design being realized, and being realized if anything better. They're going to ensure the protection of life safety and the protection of property via at least complying with codes, and then maybe getting to some higher level depending on the nature of the project.

And all these things, they all fit together, and that's the complex of the profession and the art, how they all fit together. It's not just "I like this layout." It's not just that it meets code. It's also that it meets the budget if they're being hired to ensure that your project fits within a budget. It's managing the process as it unfolds, or assisting in that management. A good architect can help in any of those areas, and wherever they're involved they will integrate the various complex factors. Even in a small project there are a lot of pieces and parts, if you will, to coordinate. They are good at, practiced at, learned at integrating all those things better than an average person not versed in the art. It sounds obvious, and yet for many it isn't.

And the idea of an architect as somebody who, again, comes in and imposes a style, for example, that costs extra money: that's not architecture. That's a particular individual who has a style and wants to do something and maybe doesn't want to listen to your own ideas. Again, that is not unique to architecture; that is a character attribute. However, stereo types are based on, I guess, generalizations and experiences people have with some people. To tip our hat to that, perhaps the profession of architecture attracts a certain type of person, but again that's not mostly the case; it's only sometimes the case. And among that group certain people might have a design bent.

There's a responsibility on the person hiring an architect, like hiring any professional really. Whether you want the responsibility or not, it's true that we have it. When I go to the doctor, I have to do my part to get myself as educated as possible to even know how to ask the right questions, and assess who for me will be a better or a worse doctor. This is no different than that.

So, we talked about all the pitfalls. We talked about some of the things they can do. And how does this all fit together, presuming these are your goals, and they almost always are: you enjoy the space; if there's a function in the space it is done productively, whether that's work in a home office or work in a commercial office, or work in a commercial kitchen or work at a home kitchen. It works. It does so beautifully at least to the level fitting with what you want and can pay for with the project, fittingly, aesthetically. If you love really ornate trim details, and you can't pay for the trim details, and that's what it takes for you to think something's beautiful, it's not the architect who's making it beautiful or not; it's the budget that limits the type of trim.

Of course beauty is relatively subjective. Yet just like a good artist, there are various rules of thumb that an architect becomes well versed in. Generally a great architect, in my opinion, will have a talent at it, which they sort of already had to some degree, but then you hone it. And there are certain things just by seeing project after project after project, and by learning about it of course academically and otherwise, where one realizes certain things work to generally achieve an experience of a space. Like, "It feels very nice and open and airy in here; I like it; I want to sit here and be here in this sort of solarium portion of a café type area," or such. Where again, somebody not well versed in the art is less likely to put those pieces all together just so to achieve the end result.

Now, that can integrate into what I call highest delivered value. So let's say you spend $5,000 on design services on a mid small project. And that money, if they're good at their profession, will more than pay for itself in the value achieved. There are various metrics for what the value achieved could be for a given owner or builder operator or developer, etc. It could be resale value of your house. You need to communicate what your value system is. It could be quality, intangible, hard to put a number on, but quality of experience in your house, and that you want to be in for, let's say, the rest of your life. So you have to really like it. And if you don't, it could interfere with you experientially, but you could almost say emotionally, every day, or bolster you every day. And putting a monetary value on that is a little tricky to do, but if it could be converted properly, and the architect does their job well to realize a

design vision that realizes your goals and your priorities, they will be more than worth their money. You will get more out of it than you paid in.

If it's a business operation, good design, again if the goals were communicated properly, the priorities of the business, etc. … An architect can't make a pretty building that therefore makes you lots of money; you have to have a viable business of course inside. But the architect, given the budget, can maximize the stylistic approach and the things spatially, material wise, that work to achieve the end of that business. So, that literally can be dollars and cents more people coming in and out. An example of this is when you go into certain restaurants people like to be in. Certainly some of the larger chains, even though they might not be high end architecture, are examples of a design vision, perhaps turned into a bit of a template, that works. And if you go in there and you like it, that's the value of architecture there in that very tangible way.

Then you have truly the artist architects that people want their art. How do you put a price on that? Very subjective, but if they uniquely deliver a certain style that you as an owner, developer, other want and value, well you're getting a lot at once.

So, we covered a lot of things quickly, but the bottom line is, besides for legal reasons and requiring a permit, why hire an architect: because they can deliver highest value to integrate the design and the construction process from the design side and best represent your interests in doing so, better than you could on your own, better than you could just with your relationship with your builder. And so those are questions to ask yourself when interviewing possible design professionals for your job.

2. **Why Hire an Architect** - *Special Edition*

Why hire an architect? Yes, hopefully they do it better than somebody who's not licensed. But an important part of the license actually can be said pretty simply, and it corresponds to something fairly accurate found in various realms in human nature. Very simply, they have something to lose, more than somebody's who's not licensed, namely their license. That's the licensed aspect. So they're going to apply a level of care to all the considerations, the integration, the structural, the life safety, not just "hey I'm a hip designer," in general. Everything is in general, so hedging your bets, big time.

Were all these buildings designed by an architect? Almost definitely. One would have needed someone to sign off on them anyway, even if there were a designer. This is what they do, pretty much that simple.

But does that mean you will like their design sense more? No, not necessarily, but as mentioned in the regular episode, it's a question of communicating what you want and a good architect translating it. It's also a question of interviewing and finding ones you like, and that part's on you. They're out there, waiting for you, and you're waiting for them if you have a real architecture project.

An architect also, generally speaking, is going to integrate cost considerations like they matter, more so than somebody, almost by definition in character who wants to cut to the chase and say "hey I'm a designer; I don't need to be licensed." It almost implies a level of kind of denial of what it takes, but not necessarily. Frank Lloyd Wright was an unlicensed professional. He's not the rule; he's the exception.

But then what about this? He economized alright. "Oh, those architects should have figured out how to make it great." Not necessarily: all buildings are a complex, a co-relationship between the architect and the developer, or the owner, etc. There are responsibilities on the client side too that kind of relate to listening and having a good relationship. That's why finding the right fit is just essential.

And then there's something that more I'm going to put on the owner side, and that's not unique to owners. It's common to human character, and that is the psychology of human expression through negation. It's fundamental to how we form our character. You see it in two year olds. It actually continues with us for life. It's "I don't have to. I can do it my way." etc. Sometimes that drives decisions that actually don't benefit us, like "I don't want to get you, mister or missus qualified architect. Who do you think you are? You think you're so great," or whatever. "I want somebody who's somebody I just want." Again, sometimes that can work, sometimes. Like in other areas of life though, sometimes it's you shooting yourself in the foot, and having the reward of being able to say "yeah but I shot myself in *my* foot *my* way." Usually at some point we think better of that. It just doesn't always have the best results, that's all.

There's another reason, and that is very simply that licensed design professionals are required to take batteries of tests, required to have a certain degree, agreed upon by boards of people, referred to, references in favor of their licensure by other fellow professionals. It's all quality control stuff. And then required to have continuing education. An unlicensed professional is not required to do that. Might they be learning and studying more anyway? Absolutely. Might not they be learning and studying more? Yes. It's less of a known quantity is all. A licensed professional, the registered architect, you know is at least getting that level of effort and successful performance in those realms. Again it's not an absolute assurance, but it is an assurance.

So why not hire an architect? You could save some money perhaps may be one thinking. (By the way these visuals are not shown to be one way or the other; they're just kind of buildings, background, showing some buildings. Not like "hey why'd you show those buildings?" No, I'm just here.) Anyway, why not hire an architect? Let's think about that. Let's look at some common trends regarding money on the design side versus what follows on the construction side. I've looked at this and wondered about this and paid close attention to this to make sure I wasn't making this up to be on behalf of my own self interest in saying design services expenses really are worth it. What have I found over the years? What I've found, and this is very rough and raw and broad stroke, is that design services and related efforts, observations during construction etc., just generally speaking, rough order of magnitude, relate to construct costs at about 10% of those. By paying somebody $100, you are likely to be getting insurance, basically, to thereby have a high degree of likelihood if they're competent (and like we said, this is all based on presumed basic competence from the architect: part of the screening process to make sure that's true; getting the right one), on $1,000. $100 to save

$1,000, or for example $100 to gain $1,000 in value, re-sale value, intangible quality of space, something like that: 1 to 10. Why wouldn't one make such an investment in something as important as a space that you spend so much of your time in or that you're relying on to make money, etc.?

3. **The Basics** - Part 1

Welcome again to another episode of the Architecture Show. Let's talk about the basics of architecture. Again I have to qualify and re-qualify, this is just a brief discussion, by no means complete, thorough, perfectly in sequence. It's just off the top, conversational, and yet there is something of value to that because what remains, what's natural, what's really important sort of shows up through, or can; it runs a risk of doing it if you've been doing this stuff enough. (… Uh, cold morning out …)

One of the things that's often overlooked or that's not apparent or that doesn't seem to be of note, in my mind, with architecture is the context in which it's taking place in terms of time. Money is sort of beaten to a pulp with how significant that is to everybody, but that's actually not architecture; that's more a reflection of collective will and priorities. And this is not by any means an ignorance to the reality of resource limitation, resource allocation and limitation. But if I were to say that one is primary, I would say that it's time. Time in production, yes; time in the process; time in the choosing on the owner or client side. And that's really what makes it the art that it is.

So, in a limitless time or money scenario, the basics are not what the basics really are in that you have this latitude to waste and play. I mean, great stuff. I hope I, I hope anybody who's is interested gets to play in that way. And in a way that's one of the things we get in a format of sitting and talking and just sort of rambling about architecture and the basics of architecture: you get this play space, and that's key.

But in the actual practice, in the actual delivery, the reality of architecture being created, there is this … (like anything, by the way of course: this is not specifically architecture. It just shows up in a particular way here …) there is this time limitation. Yes there is also a resource limitation. Somebody who doesn't understand that aspect of it, really can't understand what it is really is. Because what that means is on the providing side you have to get good at making choices, and then producing along the lines of those choices. It sounds like obvious. It's easier said than done. It takes practice. It takes hard work, talent, sure, but these things can be variously learned.

But interestingly, on the owner and client side something akin to that is required. And this is why there's a creative angst, a creative anxiety, a creative fear, whatever level of intensity you want to ascribe to that, but it's almost not perceived as creative. But it is actually in a very real way, when one chooses not this, not this, yes that design. And that can bring up a lot of things, and that's part and parcel to what the process of what architecture actually is. So, yes this is a basic. It's a basic. How do you teach this? How do you do this? Well, you try. You go for it. You go for it again and again. You seek to get better. You learn. You try things out.

Now when it's your one home, and you're getting an addition and renovations, where's the room for experimentation? Not so much. But it's like a decision making, you know. Put the effort in the upfront, in the finding somebody on a professional level, or whether you're getting it from a friend or whatever, or from books and the internet and everything. Try to find the things prior that prime you for success, where you can go "yes I did my best." But there is an element of it of "ooo, we gotta decide here." And there's an element of it that in that sense is likely to feel imperfect every time, as permanent and fixed as architecture can appear to be in its end result. That's one of its pillars of what-it-is. This permanence is often the way its thought of in the industrialized, civilized context, in its structure. There's a permanence there.

But kind of the reverse of that is seeing there's this imperfect time-limited, resource-limited process within which it happens that calls on very personal things to be successful, besides the skill. The main one that I would say is not that "I'm good at making decisions" or "I'm not good at making decisions." The main one is an insight into the fact of the way this is. That's in my opinion of course. So one can get better at it simply by getting this is what happens. "This is not unusual that this would feel stressful at this point or that would feel remorse because chose option B instead of option A or option C." I really needed to stress that for awhile.

Now let's get a little bit more into some of the other basics and the way the process unfolds. A lot of it sounds like common sense because it's sensical, if you will. But if you haven't tracked the process, if you haven't done it yourself before, if you haven't read up on it or whatever, you need to map it out, even if upon mapping it out it feels almost like you knew it already. That's why I guess they're called basics. Basics are oft overlooked or sped past, one step or another, and there's always a cost for doing it because they're not called basics because they're simple and to be left behind. They're called basics in

that it is immutable and foundational, the way it is. To make a silly metaphor but in a way a useful one, "I want to cruise up these stairs. I'm going to do step 1, step 2, and step 8." Stupid. Well architecture is like that too in that it's like start at the beginning, go through the middle, until the end. But you actually have to do it, and that also takes a tenor of character that in a sense is very patient, while at the same time is riding the forefront of that wave of limited time, limited resources: choose, and choose well. That's why it's an art. It really is.

So the first thing is understanding (they go hand in hand), understanding what you want, articulating what you want, expressing what you want, showing what you want in every way that you can. That's called the programming phase in architecture. It's the program for the project. Again, I'm describing all this loosely, but to get a good feel for it. Part and parcel to that is what do you have, existing conditions, or feasibility studies, things like this. But the key, the basic is the program, meaning what do you want. And the skill here is actually communicating, learning how to communicate, first with yourself, of sort of scanning. And again having that almost baby-like, child-like innocence in a sense and non-judgmentalism to allow oneself to say, "I like that?" You know and take the question out of it like "I like that ... I *do* like that."

We're human beings. All of our choices, everything we've done has experiences for the better for some, for the worse for others, and for most of us a mix. And as silly as it is, you know, "What color do you want this wall?" actually can be a mine field of anxiety and unknowns and wanting to get it right but being not sure. Now for some people they just go like, "What the heck are you talking about? I know that I want this, that and the other." That could seem like they're powerful; that could seem like they're smart; that could seem like they're clear. They may or may not be. They may or may not be.

So the first part of the process is the conversation, first with yourself you could say, then with those you're with, say you're spouse or your partner or your business partners, to a clarity and a conversation with the architects. I keep going back to the upfront work to find the right architect. Find the one who you're comfortable with and who you trust because if you're not able to present what it is you really want as fully as possible, is it really reasonable to expect that even the best architect could deliver it? Maybe in a fantasy because they are like a mind reader. You know "what do you want?" "Oh, make me something." And he comes back, "how's this?" And you go "oh my God, he figured me out," or "she figured me out." That's not normally how it

works. So if you want to hedge your bets towards a successful project don't count on the "I want to find a mind reading architect." This skill, this basic of articulating the program, what it is you really want is key.

Now, I'm spending an inordinate amount of time on the precursor context, admitted. Yes, that's what I'm doing here. And I'm going to speed through the delivery process and some of the design aspects because there is just so much out there on it already. There is so much out there on all of this. This is just a particular vein, a rivulet in much greater flows of information. That's why I want to focus on these things that often are not given their just due. And quite a cost that they're not often given their just due because again it's the step 1, 2 … 8. I mean that happens in miniature throughout architectural projects, and it costs in outcomes in very subtle ways. Even if it is an intangible, like a stress, like not getting along with the project team or whatever. And not to say you have to get along with the project team, but again you want to hedge your bets at every unit, if you will, of action, unit of relationship. That's a very architectural notion to understand that while it's the whole, of course the structure needs to line up otherwise the whole doesn't stand up.

3. **The Basics** - Part 2

While it's the whole, of course the structure needs to line up otherwise the whole doesn't stand up. Now you can artfully do these amazing things like Calatrava where it's extending out into space, and you go "how could it be standing up?" But the truth is he's a high artisan of understanding the basics of this needs to go on that, this needs to sit back here, otherwise it falls over, stacking two blocks, that basic understanding of all these pieces.

The existing conditions, what do you have. You have to map it out. You have to take the time to do it. Let your architect draw up your house or get a survey, whatever it is that defines "here's what we really have already."

And then also give the process it's just due for what you really want. Pictures speak a thousand words: photographs, clippings from magazines, pictures from the internet, examples of what you want, and why. And taking off the critic of oneself so that that can flow. That's like the blue sky design phase, if you will, really should be allowed to be fleshed out. A good architect's job is that they will filter that; they will hone that. And that's sort of the first process. So akin to the sculpture, you never want to take a deep cut too soon on the big rock; if anything you want a bigger rock. You can always cut away more. You can't really add more back to it. The equivalent here is throw it all on the wall, anything you want for any reason. "I don't like angular form. Why, I don't know. I don't like sharp angles, things that feel boxy. Why, I don't know." Whatever it is you don't need to have a right answer so much as do your best at fleshing it out. That's the programming.

That leads into, a couple ways of saying it, the concept design, which is the most broad stroke. You can think of someone doing a quick sketch, not that that's exactly what that is. But really if you look at it simply, overall, the process, the design process, once you have those basic raw materials of what do you have and what do you want and done well, the process is really just one of translation, choice, simplicity in expression of overall and essential pattern, and then fine tuning, iterating, honing, detailing, specifying. That's the process. So it's like whatever metaphor you want to use, a hazy view to a sharp view, painting a canvas and just getting the background, some of the

shades and the sky, and then detailing in the little pieces. I mean it's that simple in one way of looking at it. So the name of those phases of fleshing out and detailing …

Again, concept plan can also be a relative of a master plan. There is great value in having a master plan even if you don't build it. That's the whole point of a master plan. It's to make sure that even if you just build step one of a master plan that has conceptually eight steps, for example, you're doing so in a way that's congruent with a vision for what could be. It's very important. It's very easy to go a little too fast, to build something that later you regret because it's in your way of what you want to do next. Even if you can't do it now because of time limitations, budget limitations, you want to leave the door open for your long tem goal for if you really could, would be the following. A good architect is going to translate that well into developing a master plan to whatever level of detail. Concept plan is the least detailed, if you will.

That develops a little more into a schematic design. These are just terms for things getting more detailed. Schematic design: you know, basic understanding of the arrangement of space, floor plan, dimensionality, yes, views of the building from all sides, the so called elevation views, the elevation drawings, front, sides, rear.

Then that goes further and starts to develop into what's called the design development drawings. Again these are just terms for really describing that it's getting more and more detailed.

Finally, get into the construction drawings, or construction plans, or more officially, the construction documents, the totality of things specifying what is to be built for a project.

Existing conditions, feasibility, programming, hand in hand – master planning, if you do it, yes good – concept design – schematic design – design development – construction drawings: that's the basic sequence of the unfoldment and the detailing of a design in the world of architecture. So that's just a little bit about the basics of architecture. Now, someone could say well this whole thing has been sort of process focused and design essence focused. There's a reason for that, because well, there's just so much to design, I just want to do the context first.

But I'm going to say just a little bit, just, just a little bit about design. We hinted at some of this stuff earlier that the real thing is doing it, the practice,

again and again and again and getting good. Again, some people are talented, they have to do it less and yet they do it really well. But the simple rule is one has to show up and engage in the practice, again and again and again, to hone those skills. So knowing the basics without that is not understanding how it all is. Otherwise, the value of someone who is skilled in these things, the value of an architect is, and it often is by the way, belittled. It's like "oh, I knew that," again because these things sound like common sense. If you back up and you look at what was said: start simple; say what you want; draw it up; the drawing is going to start simple; it will get more detailed: yup … yawn. So again the key is understanding that that's actually a skill to navigate that well. And the way to test it is to literally go work in an architect's office or say, "Let me work on this for free," and see how you do. It's harder than it looks, a lot of this stuff. It takes practice, that's all.

So, some basics of design that likewise are so simple and yet take practice to get right. As a starting point, and it's only a starting point, it's like musical scales and certain harmonies. You start there, things are likely to sound pretty good. As one becomes a better musician you realize, or artist or whatever, that you can throw in these off notes and things in between and make it outstanding and beautiful. But it also runs the risk of really messing it up. Similarly in architecture, you can start with basic concepts of symmetry, of balance. What's balanced: does dark go on the top or the bottom, for a basic of balance of light, dark versus light? Dark on the bottom, light on the top. Maybe we could make a theory about that that's the way it looks on the earth. But whatever the case that's what feels naturally balanced. So you start from a place of natural balance. You start from a place of traditional reference of proportionality. You start from a place of, generically speaking, basic symmetry, compared to asymmetry. These are vectors of design, but they're not a cage, at all. They're just the first steps of starting to approach the feel of design. They are sort of like orienting and getting the ballast, if you will, right, upon which one may then start to extend.

If you look at the basic essence of a building structure, it has to stand up, which here on the ground means certain immutable laws must be respected about it grounding that kind of relate to things I just said in terms of balance, symmetry and proportionality, not exactly, for something to stay upright and to be stable. But then once those principles are understood, they can be creatively engaged with one another to start to extend, to do something asymmetrical, to do something that is apparently off balance to create a dynamism and excitement. Well placed, that's great. Not well placed, it's abrupt, it's disconnected, it's disconcerting. When done in the right way, with the right placement, it's beautiful and exciting. For example, one of those

pools where you can't see the edge, and it just merges into the sky. That's balanced and grounded and yet it is taking away something that we would intuitively expect, which is a horizon or a break line, and doing it in a way that is potentially very inspiring. So that's just one little example.

Those are the basics of architecture. Somebody could say no those aren't the basics; there are other basics. Yes, there are, but the ones I want to highlight are what comes up given limitations of time and resources. And then with those limited time and resources, the art of choice, understanding all that's entailed in that action, the pitfalls, the likely feelings that come up when cutting away from one option and choosing another, which by definition generally is going to feel like an imperfect choice because you have limited time and limited resources. But to do so well, wisely, in the context of a well fleshed out program, the articulation of all that you really want, with a good architect helping to translate that back into a master plan, concept plan. Develop it into a schematic design that you're hopefully OK with. Develop that further into design development drawings, and then finally into construction drawings from which one may get their building permit, and from which contractors may provide bids, pricing, and finally from which the chosen contractor or contractors may build the project. So these are just a few of the basics of architecture.

3. **<u>The Basics</u>** - *Special Edition*

To be clear, the basics in architecture actually do imply a fairly intimate, which is to say fairly extensive, which if you get into what architecture really is, even though I gloss over all this stuff, but of design, project management, operations, materials, codes, systems, products, constantly changing, our needs, people's needs, the users-of-the-space's needs, acoustics, physics, the realities of our environment. And these things are constantly changing and updating. Yeah, that *is* the basics.

But given all that, it's really so crucial, the relationship with people. You're dealing with people, despite what long hours behind a drafting desk or computer might lead you to believe. It really, really is all about relationship with people.

It's about listening, really listening. What's inside the words? And, creatively matching with what you've heard, that interplay, proactive hearing, listening, interaction, inspiration, interplay with what you've heard. You want to develop feelers, or maybe not develop so much as be open to, be quiet enough to feel. And then start to come up with core directions along those feelings, those lines. And taking those directions, which really should have no limit, the directions need not have a limit. A limited idea of pragmatism, that's a real confusion, and judgmentalism. Feel free to feel those directions. Their essence is really not limited.

But then to have that, what do you call it, I don't know, moderation to turn around, even if need be all the way, containing, a containment of plan to scale and budget and timeline: realism. That's the beginning of the process of it becoming real. But you need to start with that alive material.

And understanding the rules and regulations, and understanding how people implement them, they're not machines, people implement them, so you can actually make a project happen, for real.

Then there's this commitment or will to just follow through with a tenacity that just doesn't give up, until it's all handled and done. And that is a basic

because the highly detailed nature of it and what that means in terms of shepherding that process through to completion. It's really a normal basic event to require that persistence or tenacity or simply not being phased until it's all wrapped.

Yes, to hold that vision to the end even as things get modified, tweaked, cut away. Classic old brick building upgraded, painted nicely, and through-window AC unit. How can you architect that out? You know they did that after the fact. Well, maybe you can if you think through certain aspects of the conditioning a little more intensively first, maybe.

And I'll leave this little walk about with a bit of an apparent paradox: as an architect or somebody considering architecture, you have to understand you always must be in control. *And you can never control it all.*

4. **Primitive Foundation** - Part 1

Hello and welcome to another episode of the Architecture Show. Let's talk a little bit about materials, the fundamental structural materials of buildings. Finishes are their own thing, wallboards, paints, siding, roofing. But let's talk about some of the fundamental structure by which we build buildings.

If you go back historically far enough, you're generally going to find things that were readily available, sometimes with a little more work, from nature as is. Felling a tree? Maybe. That's pretty work intensive, compared to a bunch of boughs from a tree, or a bunch of lashed marsh type but sort of firm grasses that you could use, and leaves and things like this, and interlacing.

So the history of fabric is a weave, a lot of approaches to creating something that had a bit of a surface, which is what we need with buildings is surfaces, often relates to similar principles, not always exactly the same. Sometimes you have this (showing hands one over the other), which is roofing in a nutshell, but certain huts in for example tropical areas would use big leaves just flapping down one over the other. They would often have cross members though from which to hang the leaves. You start to see all these commonalities of form. That's how you dry leaves, like tobacco leaves. You know, they have these bars, and they hang the leaves on them.

So you can imagine in some more what we often call primitive ... which is a shame because the connotations of sort of a simplicity, not an elegance in simplicity but "you could only figure out so much" primitive. I don't know that that's really always an accurate way of seeing it. So if we can take the connotations away and say it from the perspective of an historical and an indigenous and a where we came from or maybe still are variously, and not as leaving a progression behind that we should be somewhere else. But just as a label to reference that state of living more directly off the land. And in its elegance, simplicity, or ignorance at times, yes that's possible. "If only they understood this, they could have done that," type of thing. But that's not the focus which so often gets tagged along with it. So if you can strip that away, and consciously choose to just look at directly from the earth how of necessity

it was done at some point in the past because there really was no other option.

We didn't have big manufacturing and big whatever, saws, and big things where you could do the same level of work. Of course we always get astounded by things that were done in ancient times, like the pyramids, but this is true also of some other just magnificent scale works of empire, generally. Which infers lots of people were behind some of these things, and also that a level of accumulation of knowledge took place to be able to orchestrate those people, and an accumulation of course of power.

So aside from that for a second, just looking at a tribal configuration of anywhere from say ten to fifty people or so, a little pocket community, which at some point even in the empires of old, some people somewhere would be living like that, again of necessity. There was no separate builder per se. You might be an expert builder relatively. You might be, more than an expert, recognized as "you know what, that's their passion, they focus on it, they're especially good at it." They're craftsmen more, like artisans of somebody making a vase, you know and they do the artwork on it. They sort of do more of that. "Yeah, I know how to do it too, but I specialize more in buildings." So just imagine that direct from the earth and a lot closer to it past, and to an extent that we would call primitive, which really means more directly from the earth than the advent of further tools, just as a place of starting.

And then even go before that. Before that, the line is not clear exactly, but you start getting pre even structure and you just get into a cave. I mean, that's the joke, right? Caveman is sort of an icon of prehistoric ignorance in a sense, often is the connotation. But could we just take that judgmental part, commentary of our mind, whatever value that has or not, and just try to put it aside for a second and just look at it functionally. Just like a biologist looks at the biology of a living system, like a geologist looks at the dynamics of the geology, and there is no "wow, it was so stupid back then when it was a big molten core." It is just wow, this is a sequence and a progression. If you could just look at it that way for a second to try to evidence some of the material patterns and dynamics and basics and how that works. I want to go there with this, and then take it to the present, but in a very broad stroke way.

Most of what I'm doing is qualifying the looking at it, so thanks for bearing with me with that. I think it's actually useful to do, to try to take away the connotations and just look at the substance from the perspective of materials. From the perspective of its social significance, maybe go back to the other mode. But I want to just look at the materials themselves and the approaches.

The fundamental principle of weaving is really important when you're dealing with softer materials especially. They have to overlap and weave. And not mono, something where you can have a homogenous, more or less, mixture that you spread. However that was present to, in muds and clays and earths. But now you put the two together. Plant fibers are basically, one aspect of them, is generally there is flexibility, of course less so with a tree, more so with a bough, and even more so with grasses and reeds and things. Different ones of those would decay or dry in different ways, some of which were OK, meaning they still had a structural value. So weaving a grass skirt is not that different perhaps than somebody sort of doing a form of a thatch roof or a thatch wall. It's these weaves and different levels of rigidity of plant based members. That's the plant base.

There is the earth, soil, clay related, adobes. And then there is rock and there is stone. All of these things were the fundamental natural materials. And then you had parts of animals and things, skins, definitely. Skins are most reminiscent in their behavior of like a woven together fabric that then becomes one flexible plane or a big leaf, related in its dynamics to a skin. We use the word to where it is in the construction of things: the skin. It's the surface, and it often requires a certain level of flexibility, with a tent yes, not so much with a house as we think of it, and also protection variously from the elements, shedding of water to a greater or lesser degree. And if you go back far enough again and you look at it from the perspective of you get the best you can and then you got to fall asleep; you get the best you can, and then you got to hunker down and survive.

So, prior, look at animals. There is a capitalizing on what is there already. Bedding down in tall grass, the grass creates a bit of a shelter. Shelter as a verb: to shelter. The grass shelters. And then there's is it a shelter? Do we let it have that noun yet? It's not really, it's just a grassy field. A cave, how about a south-facing cave, in the northern hemisphere that is, a south-facing hollow in a hillside with some shade but also gets the warmth of the day. Let's say that it's primarily sheltered from northerly winter winds. Now you have a great shelter. Is it a shelter? Yes, somehow it is, even though nobody made it. It is stable enough, continuing in its properties over time enough to qualify. Who uses that? Bobcats, or people I'm sure. If you were walking around in the wilderness and you were very cold and you happened upon that place and the sun was out, you'd notice, you'd notice well this is good in here. So that's the real primitive.

Then you start adding in a couple things, some boughs, a little covering, or a little more active preparation, scooping out. Let's say you have a stick, you have a staff. And maybe it's a spear point on one end, and you use it for fishing or something, who knows. The back of the staff because maybe you might not want to mess up the point, I mean I don't know, it depends. Some cultures had a digging bowl. It's a wooden bowl that they took a lot of work to make, but now they have this fairly rigid, planar, convex shape. This is a really functional tool. You could (motions over head), eat out of it. You could dig something in the ground. Things that are not so easy with these (motions fingers), not so easy to go dig dig digging. You can do it, takes a lot of time, messes up your fingers.

Likewise knapping flint, knapping stone, having a sharp edge, pressure knapping things like bone and having a sharp edge on that: you're looking at the fundamental essences of what's needed. Now most people say "yeah, it's obvious." But knowing about it, and thinking about it, when you go and address the modern materials is a very fascinating continuity with the earth processes yes, but also the fundamental physics. That continuity can create insights sometimes where they're not there otherwise, depending on your knowledge base etc. But also I've found for people something that's sort of deeply intuitive to an extent you almost wonder could it be a genetic memory even related. Certain animals instinctually know how to make a den, so you almost wonder if some of this stuff, if you start to get primitive enough in motion, action, form, material characteristics, and it's not even a heady subject. It's more of the reverse, like "yeah, I could imagine making that up on the fly. I get what you're saying."

Let's look at some other things. The earth, generally, down under ground is an even temperature. Compared to cold temperatures, it's warmer; compared to hot temperatures, it's cooler. Shading. Basic fundamentals of shelter, structure and materials.

Stones and related, bones: hard. Plant and related, there's a cross over with wood at some point when it could be that hard, not that it's as hard but it's a real rigid object, all the way to a much more flexible object, then to more flexibility and weaving. And then to mud, or the equivalent thereof, and to this day we call it mud: mudding a wall, or mudding a joint, grout. They are related ideas. It's basically clay, clayey-like, the plastic-like effect of soil mixed with the right amount of aggregate like stone, or sand or gravel or both. And this is how we make cement concrete. The difference is what we use for mud, the mud itself.

The plant matter in general has tensile strength to some degree, a resistance to pulling apart, given whatever force ranges it can operate within. But if you make it into a rope or a weave, and it's the right type of plant that doesn't decay to nothing when it dries, like certain types of plants, reeds etc. water related plants don't, you have a tensile aspect.

What can handle pushing very well? Not the plants per se. It's just this stringy thing. You push it, it collapses. You pull it, it holds something. The earth on the hand, you push and you hit a point at which it's compact and it's very hard to keep pushing. But you can pull it right apart. So it's good in compression.

Stone, normal gentle forces if you will, meaning compared to skyscrapers and the like of the modern era, you're not going to see the stone itself have an issue with pulling apart. Even though on the scheme of things, stone is not strong in tension. It's stronger, generally, like earth, in compression. It can resist getting crushed better than it can resist getting pulled apart. But it's not the individual stone now that matters. It's the aggregate, it's the bunch of stones. So if you're making a stone wall, and the wind blows, that's creating a tensile stress, force, the wind blowing here. Imagine if you had a canvas stretched across a sail, and the wind blow this way. It's pulling it taught so you can see more the tensile force. With a stone wall, you can't really see the tensile forces, but it's pulling tension across these things that are loose, which when they're loose, like soil particles and you pull apart, well they just pull apart.

The mud, the earth component, has some tensile benefit in that instead of just gravity, now you mud up all in between, you grout the joints, you grout the wall. Now that is sticking together a lot better. You can push it more, and it's harder to come apart, if that mud set in a way that allowed it to hold some tension strength, and probably more than anything just to make it act like one, up to a point. But then to improve on that, you want something fibrous, that's tensile strength. The modern equivalent or where this has evolved to that's very common is concrete with steel reinforcing. Steel can handle the tension; concrete can handle the compression; put the two together, nice balance for a wall.

So, back to the primitive materials, in a nutshell that's it.

4. **Primitive Foundation -** Part 2

Back to the primitive materials, in a nutshell that's it: stone and bone, earth as in soil, soils and mud and stuff, and then combinations with aggregate in there, you have that whole realm earth stone. Plant based all the way to real wood that's really hard. Generally primitively you wouldn't have really big trees. You could, more of a major construction project, so when you're literally trying to survive … And I forgot, skins, furs, this sort of thing, that's basically it, leathers and relatives thereof, often could be a raw hide.

There's a lot you can do with that in making a fundamental shape, encapsulation to some degree or another, which is the beginning of shelter. Combine that with capitalizing on naturally available sheltering elements, and you're really starting to see the forward motion development potential of humans, with their thinking minds, their opposable thumbs, all these amazing natural materials around us. And then imagine living in that all day every day, being immersed in the need to as well as the uninterrupted awareness of dealing with these natural materials and how they behave.

So, the weave, that fundamental fabric making principle, it's a grass root network principle. This tangled with this, all of a sudden it's a little more strong than just this one little strand.

Combine that with some basic understanding of gravity, stacking of stones. For a very long time people have been making piles with stones because it's a way of leaving something that's semi-permanent. You could come and push the stones over, but it would take effort. A pile of branches, it's going to probably rot over time, stone more permanent. So you have this dimension of permanency or not, and the relevance of communicating something of more permanency often done with stones. A stone pile in and of itself would often indicate a sacred spot, a spot that was a point of reference for something else, a meaningful spot, or a spot of literal burial or the ceremonial recognition of the passing of an individual human.

Here you have the beginnings of or the very early forms of the dimensions of architecture that relate to permanence, and our need for feeling that

permanence and continuity over time. Other cultures have addressed that differently, and they address it much more mentally because they see how it all changes and passes. Those are often spiritual traditions that take it on in that way. On the other hand, it is often spiritual or religious traditions that have made the most magnificent ornate, large, encompassing permanent architecture as a testament to reflecting the greater permanence of the greater universe or the greater higher level of spirit, diety or God, and this sort of thing. It's very fascinating what we've done. I look to some of those primitive things because the understanding that it can bring, the commonality.

Let's look to an unusual one, straw bale. Straw bales actually can handle compression because they're so densely packed, a bundle of fibrous elements, grasses really, straw. They are so densely packed and bundled in the right orientation that together, grass roots effect, but sort of unexpected that it's in compression now, that these can take some compression, not an infinite amount. Still you would be better off with certain other things for compression, but they can take quite a bit. So that's sort of an unusual use of plant matter. It has to be dried and protected because if it's not and air can get around it and water get to it, it starts to rot.

Earth sometimes can grow molds and fungus and algae, lichen and things on the surface, and over time it actually can get seeded and plants can grow from earth. But an earth-like tight really clayey wall surface generally is not going to be a problem with things rotting. The closest relative might be some stuff gets on it that mold can grow on, but not so much. You might have experienced this in an old house's basement that had like a lime plaster, which is a very mineralized dimension of earth, soil. But is it just pure mineral, is it stone powder? The boundaries between these things start to get a little blurry, but the dynamics are pretty related. It's like an earth, but it's also a little like a stone. In any case, it's not a plant based thing. It's not going to rot. Animals and plants decompose. Earth, soils, rocks don't decompose per se. They'll change, they'll dry out, but they won't … it's a much slower weathering process by which the vegetative and animal aspects of life can engage with those forms.

This is unfortunate that this studio is not sound proofed, but it's all a function of materials. Enough dense material will do a great job of sound proofing to varying degrees, different ranges of frequencies in the audio range of vibration, which is what sound is. We're not going to get to into that, but the next level of that is isolation, allowing something to float and absorb, if you will, the vibrations, not just insulate against them. But a cave: big, lots of

layers of dense stuff around you can create just astounding levels of sound isolation, quiet, quietness, even with other sounds going on around. But that's sort of another aspect of it all, but it all figures together.

That's the whole thing with architecture and the material aspect is recognizing the interplay of every phenomenon and perceptive channel that we have. Every one of them is relevant: hearing … taste? OK that's about the least relevant for architecture. But it's not totally beyond the pale in that smell relates to how we think about things, relating then to taste. So it's an experiential, it's a perceptual whole. Least relevant I suppose is literal taste, but it's funny that we use that word to judge the beauty or value of things, you know, "good taste." "He has good taste in architecture." Again, we're going to the sort of primitive knowings, channels that we have. I like to reconnect to that a bit with materials.

We talked about some of the fundamental properties of materials. But the thinking about them, just to touch on real quick, how they relate to light. What type of light is going to be on them? What feeling does it give you? And it very much does give a feeling. We talk about feelings of solidity, feelings of flexibility, feeling of openness that's not directly linked to how it's laid out in space or the exact size. It's actually the material surface characteristics. How do you feel upon looking at stone? How do you *feel* upon looking at an earth finish? How do you *feel* upon looking at a smooth painted sheetrock wall? How do you feel looking at a woven plant thatch-like surface?

So, fundamental materials, primitive materials, the amazing power of the weave principle or the rope principle, braiding, weaving, interleaving, overlapping surfaces and tensile variously tubular long thin (is a plant fiber) member, and how you then turn that into a surface, or a surface directly from animal skins. We talked about that a bit.

That in general is going to be looked at as pre doing something like a log cabin or a long house, the modes of construction where you start to involve a number of timbers. Now, why? This is important because every material we have has a temporal nature to its generation or not. Trees, we're talking longer time range, we're talking greater energy investment.

If we keep it linked to some of these more intuitive relationships to materials, it can often help us in understanding other materials. Like a roof made with this titanium alloy component, and you go wait, without even knowing anything else about it. This is not again judgment good or bad. That's not what the focus here is. It's just an understanding a little bit about it all, and

going "huh." You know, if it takes really a very large amount more of energy to chop down a bunch of trees, time energy: the tree living, growing time, as well as your energy cutting down the tree, moving the tree, making the tool that allowed you to chop down the tree, drying the tree, chiseling it around so it stacks properly, stacking it up. You get that wow, that's a lot more energy. Now, it's an amazingly powerful result is produced. So again, it's not good or bad. It's often the power relates to the energy that you put in. The material characteristics of some of these, again, alloys that we've developed, for example, are just staggeringly awesome, how strong they are compared to certain other things, more primitive thing sometimes. So it's not looking at good or bad; it's getting a sense of the energetic component, the time component of materials.

Dirt, mud, clay, sand if you have access to naturally occurring sand and the like, aggregate, little stones, rocks, you know rocks are heavy. They take awhile to move; they're less universally available often than is the dirt itself and the plants themselves, trees less available.

You start to see this sort of hierarchy of complexity, energy intensiveness, time intensiveness to prepare, gather, hone the material for it's use in construction. That's what I wanted to deliver a sense of in this particular episode. We'll be talking more about some of the specific materials and their applications next. This is a tipping of the hat to the primitive origins and the most basic hands-on visceral type of connection we may have to them, looking at it from that perspective, and then using that to help our understanding of more heady analyses of materials, their properties, their sustainability, their renewability or lack thereof, their energy intensiveness, the toxicity that's created or not when they're produced in a form for construction. So this is sort of a little aside, sort of a little background; it's sort of a little hopefully educating of our intuition about these things.

So that when we go around and look at our built environment, to see that everything we build, to simplify, in so many words, has come from these basic forces, this basic capitalizing on what nature and the terrain already might afford us, and then judging how much energy and time to put in to add additionally to that, the form, the structure, the feeling, the playing with light, the sound insulation or not, the views. These things have been around forever, and they relate all the way through today, except we have much more manufactured, much more complicated, and world transported, and industrially prepared construction goods. Fundamentally same planet, same stuff, but we've evolved it to this level.

I hope you've enjoyed this little, again, what I'm referring to as a bit of a side light discussion and yet also a little bit of a background in a very loose sense and a subjective purviewing of materials of our built environment, materials relevant to architecture. Thank you very much. I hope you come and see some of our future episodes.

4. **Primitive Foundation -** *Special Edition*

Really elevated, somewhat shielded, gentle slope, good visibility down to the ravine and over to the adjacent slope and ridge, I think it's a good spot. So, if the time was right, this would be a place. But I'll remember if I come back this way, or I'll try to remember it. I'm going to move on. Bit of an inordinate thicket there, let's see if I can to get to the easier passage here. Yeah, there we go, there we go. It's opening up a little up there.

(... sun sets, goes through windy night ... fade to next morning in pre sunrise dim but growing light ...)

So, I can already see what I'm about to do. It's just going to be a napping hut. It's not going to be wind-proof. It's not going to be beautiful. It's going to be temporary, or beautiful if you like this sort of thing. But I can see what it is. It's unique to my environment, my conditions, and needs. That's all there is really to say about that, so. Oh, there is something else to say and that is that the expedience of what I'm about to do follows actually from a long travail of wandering and exploring and passing up opportunities and changing priorities and then going like, ya know, I need a nap. And this is just a staging thing. So, there is something to be learned here.

A hollow: holds cold, collects water.

Sun will be up soon. When the sun breaks over the hill behind me, we'll really start up here. It's quite chilly now.

And look at this happenstance of limbs. So, these are dead but variously have some strength and dryness to them.

Sun is about to break over, and will change the nature of things. And I just want a temporary place where I can take a nap. So we're going from primitive to like ultra primitive in that temporary is all I need.

Now the urgency of coldness that was kind of prompting me to build this with a squirrel-like (chuckle) enthusiasm is probably going to go away soon as the sun rises. But this might serve me later, ya know.

And by the way, of course, shelter is certainly partly psychological. You can't really see what this affords me right now, but it's kind of a bivouac place to sleep. Of course it's not covered yet.

Oh, there's something else I have to mention. So, I had talked about the weave a lot, but there's a lot implied in that, corollaries if you will, that could be called more simply a tangle. And also there's something else leaning things in and that's a crotch. Yeah, a snag, a bramble.

Yeah, that took me about 20 minutes. And utilizing the snag, the bramble, the crotch, the cross member. And there are so many qualifications. The environment isn't fair, but it's always there. So I worked with this one. It's just a napping hut anyway.

And sure enough, the sun has started to rise. I don't really feel its heat yet.

(… view from inside the leaf covered makeshift primitive structure …)

Oh yeah.

5. **Style & History** - Part 1

Hello and welcome to another episode of the architecture show. Sort of dimming light in here, but we're just going to go with it.

The style and history of architecture is what I want to talk about today. And not style and history as in the specific styles (maybe we'll touch on that a little bit) or the specific history (maybe we'll touch on that a little bit). But again our excuse is that there's already plenty of good stuff out there, better than what I would present anyway. What I want to do is talk about some of the general sort of underlying reasons or aspects or things to think about regarding what is style and what is the history of architecture, what is its relevance, what are some of the things that we see happening, in general.

So first of all, what is style and specifically style in architecture or more broadly style in the built environment? Well it's basically something with a notable feature, something like that, or something that is historically identifiable, or just identifiable, period. It's sort of two ways of saying the same thing: notable feature, identifiable historically. What qualifies as notable? What qualifies as identifiable? Well basically that a lot of people would agree with that, and particularly people of expertise would agree with that. I mean that's kind of the metric behind most of these things. But I want to touch on that right out of the gates because, well, you could disagree. And that's an important thing to note. But usually when people are speaking about it, they're speaking about the commonly held notions of style, and the commonly recognized relevance of the history of architecture.

I'd say a lot of the history most would agree is fairly accurately known, a lot of it, not all of it: the further back you go, the more mysteries there are, especially with forms of building that would decay and would leave no remnant of themselves. Wood in general, wood construction in general given enough time will just decompose and there could be literally no, easily anyway identifiable, record of it. But once things became a little more permanent and once the means of recording even just in written form and sketches of what people were encountering in different parts of the world, then a history is written.

But again, what qualifies as notable features, and what qualifies as historically identifiable? There's some interpretation, especially on the style side. Then there's the concept of style of something having style, which is it qualifies as somehow it has something special, usually artistic, or something special about it that qualifies for this style. So that's just a little you know the background like I usually do.

The link to history with style is the first place that I want to start because, well, if you go back far enough structure served a fundamental survival based function. And you're in a certain environment, you're in an environment that the weather is the first thing, normally, to contend with, far and away, typically in regards to structure, the most prominent design guide of why was that built that way. And then the result happens to be something that you can call a style, but it's driven by the weather. It's driven by the materials at hand. And it's then driven by sort of techniques that people knew, figured out, didn't know, whatever, so that you could see certain identifiable styles.

A great example of a style in that sense is an igloo. What are the building materials you have to work with? Ice. What's the environment you have to work with? Really, really cold. How do you build a structure that you can stay warm inside with that material in those conditions? You could stack up a bunch of … You could do different shapes. It turns out the most efficient shape to heat and the most efficient amount of material is actually that hemispherical shape of an igloo. Now did somebody logically arrive at that or more likely trial and error. And if you think about the margins of trial and error in a super, super cold environment, the margins start to diminish. And somebody figured it out somewhere and ran with it.

Tropical huts, so now it's in a class that people would either say is not architecture at all, which is where I think where one's opinion is really welcome. Wait, who gets to say whether something is architecture or not? But that's where you start looking at the definitions people hold and the metrics. But it's certainly part of the progression in any case; I think everybody would agree with that.

So there's this kind of primitive (again it's how it gets labeled) stage. Then there's just vernacular, so called vernacular architecture, architecture local to a place, sort of how people just built. And generally speaking this is on the next step, if it's looked at as a progression from the primitive architecture, is like the vernacular architecture. And that, however, is not as far divorced, not as far removed as one may imagine based on the perceived level of

civilization and level of society of an area, because again typically traditional vernacular architecture was driven by things prior to mechanical heating and cooling and the like, and also a much less tamed environment, if you will, just generically speaking. So, usually vernacular architecture incorporated a lot of the same drivers in function, function and available materials and ability to harvest and use those materials, which related to the co-evolving systems of how people lived where they lived. That is kind of the ground work on which the style and history of architecture builds.

Later and only later was there this driver that became something else, ideas that is and beliefs. But let me qualify that: that was always there and it would affect, in ways we might not be able to figure out, always identify easily, the shape that was chosen, for example. But on the scheme of things it was driven functionally with a survivalistic bent. And then there was the mythology, or the culture, the beliefs would affect, but usually those would affect ornamentation, coloration, some gesture. However, that starts to qualify, just generically speaking, as a style, beyond it just happens to look a certain way, but an optional, an intentional change.

And the inherent link to history, so to speak, the one aspect is through materials at hand, weather conditions that you're responding to, and cultural and religious trends, yes, but always first built on this very sort of survivalistically defined reality of what you could get, how you could build with it, the means by which you could fashion those materials, and the climatic and immediate environment and responding to it, defined in large measure style. Sure you were looking at one particular group's solution to those conditions, but often you'd see very similar solutions in different places because they're driven out of this necessity.

Like the tropical huts raised up off the ground, using big leaves that were available there as a siding or a roofing over these temporary boughs, large open areas for cross ventilation where it's very hot. These sorts of influences are really driven by people's ability to think and try things out, trial and error, and survive and hopefully do well in those conditions.

So that's typically deemed pre history and pre architecture. But making such a distinction is kind of up to you and why. Now I'm not trying to debunk the more conventional usages of those terms, but they're very important to understand that they are applied terms. When does it become architecture? Anyway, you see this fundamental aspect of style driven by these conditions.

And then as trade roots expanded, as technology spread, and by technology I don't mean more modern technologies so much as methodologies, kind of tricks of the trade, of how to, I don't know, make a better cutting implement, for example. Those things would transmit certain distances and over certain geographies driven by all sorts of amazing things that might drive them, including trade, but also including things like conquest and the like.

And often the level of permanence and grandiosity of scale would correspond to something some would call civilization. So even prior to some of the more what we would call advanced technologies, you had a greater leveraging of ability basically through people but through certainly scientific type knowledge of how to craft and how to utilize the materials at hand and the systems at hand to create something that we still are not entirely sure how they were able to pull it off, the pyramids for example. So there is that. And all those things are part of the history.

And again the techniques would spread; the materials started to spread more and more through trade routes. There was a time when people thought that, I think, people were a lot more isolated than more recent evidence has suggested, that even in times quite far in the past people from certain lands were found, evidence of their existence was found far afield, not just for warfare, not for known trade routes. But it expresses this element of cross pollination, if you will, of styles and techniques that was happening long before people often, we often realized it in these modern times. And so that was affecting styles in ways we may never know.

So the vernacular construction, buildings or architecture, depending on where you draw that line or if you do at all, in any case, I just want to highlight that generally speaking it's not that far removed from the dictates of primitive construction in the sense of fundamentally driven by function and the baseline of survival. It's shelter.

The value systems, the cultural overlays, the mythologies, the religions, their influence in general can be seen more in obvious fashion on the buildings as it would appear people had more time to do more than just barely get by or to survive, and do other things with their time, we don't know what, perhaps meditate, looking out on things and considering. But a different sort of time than "hey I want to add a motif, a symbol on my building, a sequence of coloration of paint." The other part of that is we really don't know, we weren't there, and some of these things they might have done we would never know. But generally we see that trend in history.

That is to say a trend of greater complexity and greater purposeful ornamentation or play, depending on the case, in what we created, which appears to be related to, yes an evolution of ideas, an evolution of knowledge, cross pollination of ideas from different places, new techniques, but at the same time and apparently more relevant was people's greater ability to marshal the activities of survival so that they had more other time to do things such as really start to express themselves in ways that were not just a reaction, even if a very successful and powerful reaction, to the forces at hand. Now you had this little more proactive space where people again started to craft something they wanted to express for meaning, for identity, for beauty. So that's how that would appear to be a trend, different time scales, different levels and different places, but that seemed to be a trend starting to take place as people variously appeared to be able to survive more effectively basically and have more time on their hands to do other things than just try to eat and maintain shelter, warmth and basic safety.

And variously in different locations, one could see a confluence of factors whereby there were marked steps forward. Classical ancient Greece was wow, you know this civilization took place. I mentioned Mesoamerica, the Egyptian Pyramids, the Great Dynasties of China, some of the early construction in Japan, you could see that things were sort of going to another level. In no case do I mean, just as an individual, to suggest that that means better inherently, so much as just a wider palate and a greater scale of design and construction taking places in these places.

Another one such place and time was generally what people call the Renaissance in Europe. In and around this time there was this influx of ideas and materials and changing perceptions and imaginations and travel and the new world and different access to materials, different access to cultures.

The aspect of it that could be described as built on the back of very unjust relationships between people had been taking place variously for a long time. And often there was that component of empire and grandiosity. That simply is what it is; it's how a lot of these things took place. Would they have happened otherwise, what would it have looked like? We don't know, but it certainly wouldn't have been what we've seen in just these materials. And just you know the changing perceptions of the world would affect how people would think when they were designing.

Still comparatively there was this overarching religion for example, or at least one that needed to be nominally accepted or the hat tipped to it in the construction for example of a cathedral, whether the architect or the builder

fully believed all the different things that it would be purported they should at that time historically, we don't know. In fact, in some cases we know that they didn't, or more they would add their own little, they would try to sneak in some more personal expression.

However on the scheme of things, as much as there was an artistic variation, and there certainly was, there were total new levels of things being created. On the scheme of things they may be said, this is open to debate of course, but they may be said to have been evolving along a classical line, greater connection to traditional some context within which it's then evolving on it, as opposed to a clean break and something just utterly different being proposed, but rather sort of a progression and a growth, or at least that was the thought in a lot of the styles.

And from that perspective, it could be seen as primitive building, vernacular architecture, civilization and empire, and then sort of even greater levels of that.

5. **Style & History** - Part 2

From that perspective, it could be seen as primitive building, vernacular architecture, civilization and empire, and then sort of even greater levels of that by which all these things started to synthesize, and you see these just amazing mergers between art and painting and sculptural sense and knowledge and materials and structural knowledge and religious ideas and then ability with wealth and time to create for example some of the cathedrals and some of the buildings, for example before but during the Renaissance and forward. So it seemed to be overall trends. And a lot more dissemination and style of architecture that's built in Europe, for example, now literally transporting via plans and ideas on a boat to the North American continent.

And then as the level of industrial complexity, getting finally to the Industrial Revolution, the means and methods of ability to put these systems together and also some of the drivers of what is important to the society in a different direction than an overall mythology, just, nothing diminutive about it, culture. Excuse me. Right, so during this Industrial Revolution and coming up to it is kind of like a swell and different drivers, now one being this industry in housing. Before that, you know, variously people sought to get the most work out of people but not via a factory, not via a big construction. The big construction was to glorify the rulers, to glorify the religion. Now you had this element, a driver, a different value system driver producing something very functionally based to produced wealth, and to produce outcomes, whatever somebody's view on that. But that was a really secular notion.

The history of rulership is actually not so secular. Even though it relates to what we would call secular, it was very merged in the past, generally speaking. This was actually a new component in that sense. It had always been there, but one that now affected architecture. And you started to have these larger functional buildings. What's a precursor? A barn? Or some area in which the land is arranged a certain way of buildings for certain practices to take place? Yes of course, but now you had a new stream, a new level of intensity of that stream affecting the architectural style of certain buildings.

Now it starts to go off the chain, if you will, of some of the previous predominant vectors of style while the basis was still totally functionality. And this is not a linear sequential overview of course, broad stroke, looking all over, seeing these trends. The idea of an idea driving design started to grow. Funny to say that because it was always there. People were always affected in how they designed and built things based on ideas in their head, or convictions and beliefs. But the idea that an idea, so no longer well it's within this religious context exactly, it's as linked to this specific functional very purposeful thing driven by trial and error and experience. A little bit something else started to grow and grow and grow.

And more common people if you will, not following the dictates of an authority or directly the mandates of an employer, but more independent merchants and independent thinking, started to affect how wide this pathway started to open. You get to rethink the building, the design, not for the king, not for the factory, not to prove that one had such a mastery of classical design sense to do a variation of it that was just fitting a new place that we had arrived at physically and could now build that way with our wealth. But I don't know, actually, let's think.

Or wait a minute, let's not think too much, let's revive. Let's reach out and do a Greek revival. Nothing wrong that, but that's a revival. Style revival, happens regularly, goes in cycles; look back, grab something, kind of mix it with what's currently happening.

At some point in fact, wait, let's be something else; let's be something new; let's be something modern, modernist. So, ideas driving style unlinked, more philosophically, just what if, what does it mean, with a question mark, not go reference an ancient text, a traditional text, a dominant form coming from the ruling class, the government, and notions of tradition. No, it's a question: What does it mean? What should we do? What would be valuable to express?

Then sometimes, styles, especially after this, would just, the only idea that … well, that's maybe undercutting it a bit, but one way of looking at it is … anyway, not the only idea … the idea that was come up with was "I don't' know, but it's not that. It's other than that." Post … I'm not saying that's what this style is, so much as the label describes it in this way. There's not really a substantially new label, but to say it's after, you know, post modernist. Now you're getting into this very free open realm.

In any case, a general progression may be seen to have taken place from less to more permanent in the nature of people's buildings, from the so called

primitive, to the generally more substantial that composed the so called vernacular buildings, from which sprang the, again so called, vernacular architecture. Yet drivers of design were not that much different from its primitive precursors in a given region or within a given cultural or religious or mythological or other world view, the way people lived in that area, how they perceived their world, how they perceived their place in living in it, greater context.

Now I realize the way I've been talking about some of the developments and describing this kind of unchaining and the idea of an idea is actually sometimes in certain cases literally diametrically opposed to how people have described the developments in design. Meaning, some of the ornamentation and gestures true to tradition, even if they were an expansion of an idea that people had pre history, so called, it was actually not functional. And I said that it was built on fundamentally survivalistic function and then some kind of when people had more means at their disposal started to add layers, but on that same fundamental core. That's true in a sense, that things … I get it, why that's said.

Because for example, modernism, the idea was actually just to look at function. And yet it's an unchaining of the context in which one approached design. So you know, early enough in any case, there was no gesture that wasn't really seen in a sense as functional. Now what does that word mean, functional? It doesn't mean, as we started with, just shelter, protection, safety, survival, heat or cool, or whatever. Actually, generally speaking the pre history is that there is no separation of functional considerations. So there's "my survival," but that's not a separate silo from "my world view," "my spiritual," mythological, religious, whatever, however that's categorized, total perception of what's important in the world. So, gestures built off of that.

And then well, what about playful gestures, what about high levels of ornamentation: that wasn't really functional, right? Yes, but it was built out of that paradigm, and then it was pleasing. It seems like it's a divorce from function. But I just want to take the view that from the perspective of the past and the progression in which it was unfolding, it wasn't viewed as a revolutionary shift. It wasn't viewed as a fundamental break.

Yes, in certain cases, somebody could say it was not OK to ornament that type of building in that way, and then somebody did. But that's more like a totality of expression of what was already there as people. We love things that bring us pleasure etc. So certain forms of ornamentation might have been outlawed, and then somebody did it. So, it is how you look at it.

But, even though the professed aim, and actual aim let's say, of modernism and other styles was to actually respond directly to the function, which you could say was a returning. But if you look at the forms, the way that was played out, I think that's a little open to debate if it was along the same vector as what was happening. This is something to consider and discuss. As I'm presenting it, it is a marked shift, and it did follow on a large scale. Not everywhere always, the world is a very big place; a lot of things happened in different times in different places. But on the scheme of things, the ability to manipulate materials, and means of construction, and what we could build with, and the way we were rethinking our world in and around the Industrial Revolution and all the things that were taking place in and around that time, and then a little following, and the new rethinking of design, whether the priority was stated and accurately stated as "function, function, function."

However, the way that broke with the past, the *way* it broke with the past, not its stated purpose, but the way it broke with the past is what I'm saying was a crucial fundamental change in the approach to style in architecture. And following from that was experimentation that related to the way of thinking, meaning "I'm going to define the basis of the priority of this design as a new thing. Here, I'm going to tell you what it is." And there was no reference necessarily to historical context; there was no reference necessarily to a religious context; there was no reference necessarily to a geographic basis. There might be, but all these things started to be called upon as if it were optional. You know, "I'm going to choose different palettes as a designer," etc. That's the notion I was trying to get at with the free open realm.

And where does that leave us now? Well, look around, and perhaps you'll see. But, there's a lot happening. There's a lot happening relating to means, I would say, more so than fundamentally style. So, building automation, that results in a change in the way the building looks and therefore its style; potentially, it can, amazing materials, just high tech. But to me, that's not a revolution from the revolution of designing on the basis of ideas, new ideas, ideas off the chain of the past. But rather, now we're in that evolution, that to me, again what I'm proposing here, fundamentally began in and around and just after the Industrial Revolution. So while we have green building, which results in certain styles, and while we have super high tech, and while we have computerized and automation, there has not yet been a new revolution in approach to style.

Now, I'm just going to close out with reiterating this is one opinion, one view, the major purpose of which is to hopefully inspire you, hopefully encourage

you to go look into architectural styles, look into the history of architecture, and see how it's presented. And hopefully by having this view, which maybe is a little different here or there than some of the predominantly held views, that depends on what you'll find, that it will kind of dimensionalize that search and enhance that appreciation.

Being able to look at things in different ways I would suggest is really important. So seeing how it's historically held, for example, a view on style, seeing how it's currently put forth in standard practice, if you will, the categorization of the different styles and how they relate, and then thinking about it a new way: perhaps some of the ideas I've presented here in this episode of the architecture show will be such a "hmm" that's a different way of looking at it. And then trying to see with no point of reference of a category or an historical context, and just directly perceive, if you can, just to appreciate form and function in architecture, directly.

And then, lastly I suppose, certainly not least, is developing your own views on style and your own assessment and narrative of the history of architecture and the relevance and the interconnection of the styles and the history.

So again, I hope it serves you in that way. And enjoy your exploration through the styles and the history that's all around us in our built environment.

5. **Style & History** - *Special Edition*

Style and history of architecture, you know, it's pretty much a heady subject because most of what we see around us really isn't what I'd call a style. OK, technically it's a style, technically, but it's kind of like devolved versions of a real style driven by, just by you know nothing against it, just basic kind of construction and economy and things just kind of collapsing into these forms we so often see.

Searching for style, well history is all around us, but looking for a little value, meaning, a grab in this somewhere.

So, a lot of what zoning and the like does is basically make us conform to something that already exists, already existed. Again, there's nothing wrong with that exactly, I mean the templates they're referencing. They have substance. What they're referencing is usually a continuity and a fittingness or an attempt to kind of create that, and that's not a bad place to start, but in a way … in a way … I want to say "in a way" again … Yeah, in a way, that is just like almost a damage control, you could say, or a preventive salve attempt, you know. Is that it? Well, I guess it's a safety net, someone trying to make a safety net for us.

Look it's a stockade fence, just like they used to have at the old forts, well not really, kind of.

Some historic gestures there, right, with a huge electric service. What can we say about that in regards to style; what is that? It's a very modern industrial age reality to just have this infrastructure kind of stabbing and crossing everything.

Ah yes, convenience store gas stations. That's on the top of a convenience store gas station, a convenience store gas station! What is that, futuristic gothic?

Enclose the box; enclose the box.

Searching … searching …

Those windows are fake. What have we done?

What style is this? Dumpster hut? What style is this, dumpster hut enclosure, yeah, salt box dumpster hut gable ends, retractable sliding plastic door?

(Pause on close up view of Stop Sign.)

But when is the time to just tear it down? Tear it down, a fresh palette, freedom to draw on or not, to create something truly fitting.

This is actually what I'll call real architecture. Don't confuse it. Don't think I'm saying I love this style more than others, or "oh, he's a modernist." No, it's just this is a place that makes and serves coffee.

OK, this place is under construction, clearly, to preface that. But here we have what I will call a real piece of architecture. Again, don't get it confused with a stylistic preference, or better than historic or anything like that. But this is new; it's speaking to the function; it's speaking to the place. You know, those clerestory windows, I dare say they wanted light in there. And it's clearly within a certain level of project, if you will, and therein lies its honesty, its integrity, its aesthetic, if you like it, and its function. It's real, one of what I call a real piece of current architecture.

Old historic, bold new, juxtaposition, does it work? It seems a little hmm.

I have no idea. Good luck out there.
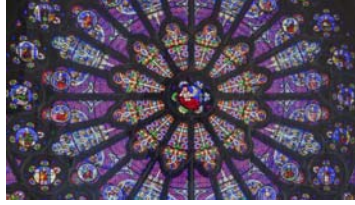
6. **Context & Trends** - Part 1

Hello and welcome to another episode of the Architecture Show. This one we're going to talk about context and trends, and they actually go together, very much so. There's nothing separable from context, never. What is context? It's a blurry line sometimes between background and foreground, between context and activity within context. The two are constantly affecting and evolving one another, so much so that one might say that it's an artificial division. And yet somehow it's helpful to us to see a this the object, and that around it, the context. However, they're in a constant communication and as we said, perhaps they're not really best thought of as separate at all.

Anyway, the context for architecture: what we need. Architecture fundamentally is for people; it's for us. There are dimensions that relate to accommodating a function, is generally how we think of it because it's centered in ourselves outward, for an animal or animals or plants or another function, an industrial function. But that itself is being driven by what, our wants and our needs, people's, healthcare, education, specialized focuses of what we're trying to deliver in a certain space or to accommodate or to catalyze or to create the proper vessel, the vehicle for the optimal, really. Generally speaking optimal is what we're looking for, without suggesting that there's only the perfect solution, but optimal solutions, optimal ways of translating your needs and your wants and the reality of space and your interaction with space and the built environment into wonderful, functional, beautiful hopefully, structures, spaces, places, buildings, the built environment, an outdoor area, a setting.

So the context first, because of the way it arises in us and the way it sort of gets engaged in architecture, is what do you want, what do you need, and we've talked about that throughout. But context for architecture in general, which is now why in general, because we're going to look at trends here, is what do we want, what do people want, what do people need. For example, demographics, at the time of this show, 2017, there are certain demographic trends and there are certain age group trends. Like soon on the horizon there is going to be a particularly large demand for elderly housing, for example. So that's a trend, but that's less of the sort of big picture essence that I want to

talk about with trends. However, that's no less important, probably more important; that's the very practical specific where the rubber meets the road.

A lot of the specific trends are actually harder to predict than some of the bigger picture trends. And also with the bigger picture trends, we don't necessarily say "yeah, like within three years;" we're saying "like well it's coming; it's coming over the next five, ten, fifteen, twenty years. We're just moving in that direction." So there are different ways of looking at the notion of trends.

Before I get more into that, however, more about context. Oft overlooked, and it's interesting as to why this can be overlooked, is the physical reality in which we build. What I don't mean is the physics of how a beam carries a load. That we very much have been responsive to and very much incorporated it into a controlled analysis approach, etc. Some of the finer points of design that true artisans in the field seem to master without some of the analytical tools, and they have before the analytical tools really could exist because of lack of sort of calculating power, is light and ventilation. These things are actually very complicated when you analyze them. But with the help of computers, we can. That relates to a trend which we'll get to next of what we're able to incorporate consciously purposefully and accurately in our design with some of the new tools and what more people are able to incorporate, that they weren't before without these tools, even if a few geniuses here or there were able to without the tools, or somebody who got lucky.

Then there's trial and error kind of evolution of systems where you'll see in a vernacular architecture, they really figured out a perfectly sweet solution to ventilation or moisture control, that one would have to presume probably took place over simply building again and again and again, and modifying the building, a living and breathing thing, the building in this type of scenario.

But what I mean, what I was touching on with the physical context, the world we're in, is not just the physics, not just the dynamics of the light and the air, the bigger dynamics of how those systems are working. Like how much wood, if you're building out of wood, how much wood is in the area, how is it readily available? That's just a practical economic view on it, like the price of steel went up, etc. But I am now touching on the greater ecological ramifications, not first here (I'm not saying that shouldn't be looked at this way or it should) but I'm not first looking at that from an ecological value basis, like an environmentalist view, even though if anything I think somebody would characterize my views as that, but I'm not looking at it like that here first. I'm

looking at it systematically, meaning how it behaves in the system of the context for architecture. And it relates more than just economically. It relates to resource and energy flows and availability.

And all of these things, it's so amazing, nothing is isolated. So how we think about them, since we're driving most of these things variously when there's an actual specific project, "I want this; I don't want that." If we think, whether or not it's accurate, that we should be prepared for a terrorist attack or something, in a certain location, therefore "I want a super thick wall." And really let's say the statistical likelihood of that event happening is miniscule compared to tornado, lightning strikes, hurricanes, high speed winds, and all the relatives of other forms of damage, or somebody going out of control and driving into your building by mistake or something. However, if that's important to us for whatever reason, emotionally driven, fear, whatever the reason, that's just as and actually more so generally speaking an element of how the context, yes it exists in the outside world, then it changes the way we're thinking, and then we respond, potentially completely out of proportion to what's happening in the world.

It's just as important how we think about it, and more so generally, more important than how it "really is" in the world, whatever that is. Well, what is that? Things you can measure, for example air pollution or indoor air contaminants from a urea formaldehyde used as a binding resin for a plywood or something like that let's say. The truth is how much impact that might have on you and your family depends on many factors in your home, the amount of ventilation, etc. etc. However, again, if the context … The context is two parts. One is that stuff is used in that to make that. The other part of the context is how much do you care about it. They're never separate.

So, on the ecological front, the environmental front, the resource, the energy flows, the life cycle, the context is, so it would seem, the human race is having a greater impact via the number of people, and the intensity of the processes, industrial they could be characterized generally speaking or on a grand commercial scale, you know enormous beef farms and clear cutting and what not, greater impact than it ever has in history. And this is affecting, literally, the context in which we build, the temperature, literally, greenhouse gases, the temperature ranges, and all these things.

All of this is the context for architecture, and it's part of the trends. Why, because so it would seem we're going to continue to, sadly but so it would seem, we're going to continue to just wipe out the number of fish in the sea, greater toxify the sea, emit more greenhouse gases, even if we try to curb it

there's more people. So the trend is, whether in real life or just in your mind, so that's why I want to say sort of take it out of the mode of wait which is it, made up or not, and look at it as the context that's affecting the trend. So it's however it is in the real world, then how we generally think about it. What is that context?

That context is there are issues on the ecological front relating to destruction of habitat, consuming too much energy, producing too much waste, making too much pollution. How do we protect ourselves from it, how do we do less damage, etc.? That is some of the physical context.

We talked a little bit about some of the specific drivers of trends, like a growing number of people in a certain age group that will need a certain type of accommodation. And that's real, and that's totally practical and accurate.

There are some other things that we see coming down the pike, a lot of them driven by technology, because we just keep, even if we're messing up certain systems in the world thus far, we're just marching along with this amazing, amazing, just seen in and of itself, I'm not saying good or bad, so much as just staggering in the power of the technological advances we're making and continue to make at an accelerated pace.

Interconnectivity, the internet of things, responsiveness, 3D printing, modular construction, customizable responsive fabrication not just by yourself but to third parties who can do it very cheaply because they have grand economies of scale, you start to put all that together and it's a bit what does that look like in particular. There are things that are real time responsive, we're doing it right now, but they're going to become more and more cost effective. The more people use them, the more common they are, the more they've been manufactured, the more the price is going to come down, as well as they're going to get better and better. Occupancy sensors and the like, yes, lighting, mood music control, all of that is sort of software based first, if you look at how is that happening and how is that getting so good, coupled with these increasingly efficient and responsive devices that are all interconnectable.

There's the responsiveness of the real time creation of space, let alone holographic possibilities that is like a virtual space within a space, which is coming, when who knows. But all that relates to customizable responsive space, space that's controllable, you can connect with at a distance potentially.

6. **Context & Trends** - Part 2

Customizable responsive space, space that's controllable, you can connect with at a distance, potentially. The more money you have, the more you'll be able to do that sooner. But again it's coming. Start my coffee automatically. That's nothing. Check the state of the turkey in the oven; it's starting to get a little interesting. And control the temperature of the oven, as I look. That functionality isn't architecture, but it is, because it all relates to how we relate to the building, how we relate fundamentally to our environment, our built environment. This is a trend.

Programmable, responsive, customizable, but customizable in construction. 3-D printing, yes, we'll get more into that in a second. But modular and nicer and nicer modular, and the way in which we think about housing shifting to be more accepting of something that's mass produced. Not mass produced in a shabby stupid way, where you go "oh thanks for the box landed on my site, and I go inside the cubicle. Thank you." No. But yes more akin to cars. I love my car. I see other people driving the same car. I don't feel like it's not the car I want. And you can customize your own car a bit.

But I think the customizing, because the tradition of architecture of being a one-off totally customized construction event, and because they're more complex, not in terms of the machinery necessarily but in terms of the geometry and the interconnection of spaces and functions and where are windows and where's plumbing and all this stuff. In that sense they are inherently more customized or prone to customization. This you're going to see reflected in the modular construction companies' ability to customize for you in advance, panelized construction, etc. etc. This is a trend.

Couple that with the responsive systems, programmable systems, and you have something pretty amazing that some would say is there a need for the architect anymore. Where'd the architect go? The architect is sort of dissolving into these computerized and fabricator co-evolving intelligent systems. However, who coordinates all that; is there a need to help with that stuff? The architect may start to shift more into a role of even more so of a

translator and coordinator, even more than they are now, as opposed to "originator."

People will be looking at and being able to model with very cheap and easily accessible, more and more, 3-D virtual reality type of modeling of what does the space look like and feel like all on their own. "So why do I need the architect to tell me where the wall goes when I just moved it, moved it over; I like it better. Get me that. I'm buying it." That's going to diminish the role. However, big complicated skyscrapers etc., there is still a specialization of the architect as designer, but where that specialization, where that special expertise is applied is going to shift. The role will feel different, I think, than the Architect with a capital "A." That's probably a notion of historical industrial revolution, recently, and currently yes, and some homes if it's really innovative yes; it's going to have to be really innovative, which generally speaking means it's fewer people with a feather in the cap, where you go "wow, that's *that* architect." A lot more translators, that's a trend.

What about complicated forms: primitively in the past we had organic materials by which we'd naturally make organic forms, and be responsive to and with organic forms. Rounded shapes, of course, simply a little hut etc. often had some curvature to it just by bending a bough etc. And then buttresses had arcing, and then people with stone learned big vaulted cathedral spaces and what not. But on the scheme of things especially with industrialization it became more rectilinear as a whole. Now as our technology via a finite digitized sort of analytic calculating mode, which kind of inherently is rectilinear in its basis, until it gets good enough. And with computing power and all these things coupled with fabrication techniques as well as the popularized consciousness of what is now, what is trending, and what's futuristic etc., you're seeing really a rapid incorporation of amazing new organic, organic meaning curved basically and variable, forms. That's a trend. You're going to see more of that. Now in what sector, it depends. Certainly in the big high expense sector. It's generally speaking harder to do for homes.

This is where things like 3-D printing come in, where there's going to become a point where you're going to be able to fabricate structurally analyzed for you by the software interesting forms that you can say "oh I want to use that to make a wall," and it's an organic shape.

Also materials are going to become more I'll call it responsive, smart materials, amazing materials, materials that reflect in a certain way, materials that absorb light in a certain way, materials that change color based on

temperature. Phase change materials, again, this has existed, but it's like "how do I use this in my house?" these type of salts that phase change at certain temperatures. And it's only for sort of the avant-garde passive solar enthusiast of the '70's or something who was trying to do this, and he was kind of mad scientist like for the common conception. No, this stuff is going to get packaged, flexible, available, cheaper for a more comfortable, more easily and finely tuned controlled environment. This is a trend.

The context on this front that we just talked about it as a trend but really it's the context, it's the technology that's out there. The dynamics of the interaction of us with this technology sort of co-evolving itself with a speed that's astounding and with a momentum that seems to almost have a life of its own. That could be called context, and it's also a trend, and, yes. That's context and trend.

Integrated living environments, getting the value of the ecological for our well being, seeing how people recover quicker in a hospital when they have a view of a beautiful natural environment or hear burbling running water going by or music and the variable lighting, not just this blazing fluorescent light that gives you a headache. I mean there was a time when it was like "oh get over it, you're being weird, this is what feels official and powerful" is being under the fluorescent light. That's what it is. "This is so industrial strong." We're sort of getting past that, and saying I want it to feel good in here. And the solutions to feeling good are not just fire, for example, which produces the most wonderful, human, natural light; I guess not everybody likes it, most people do. But the LED lighting and some of this lighting, it doesn't have this stigma of going back in time because clearly it's super technologically advanced. It's current and it's new and yet it's reintegrating the organic dynamism and wholeness that we crave. So we're going to see more of this.

We're also going to see literally more integration with literal living systems, whether that's plants inside. Some of the issue with taking care of life is maintenance. If you don't take care of your plants they're going to not do well and they'll look bad and you'll get problems. Smarter controls, smarter responsive automated systems that are cheaper are going to step in here. They're going to be part of the solution, again on a large scale building and buildings is where you're going to see it the most and most impressive scale of indoor gardens and all this sort of thing, sort of space-agey stuff. The background it's coming from is it's old. It's like the reverse of space age. Now it is space age, and that is including things like farming. We've been farming "forever" as a human race, but now incorporating it in our bubbles of buildings. That's a very space age type thing. That is going to happen more.

More walkways, pedestrian friendly dimensions of environment, and who knows with self driving cars and non-polluting engines what that's going to look like, but that's going to get better and better. And that's all part of a clean … Certain places clearly are going to get disgustingly polluted just because there are too many people and regardless it's a function of money and how can they do this. Other places are literally going to look like cities of the future; they already do. The skylines are completely transforming, even in a place like New York City. It's a much different city than it was twenty years ago, for anybody who knows it well. The feeling of driving down the west side or looking at it from New Jersey across the river there is "this is different, this is changing." It's going to keep happening. Anywhere where there's an economic driver to allow new construction you're going to see these new things integrating.

This interplay between living and non-living environment, instead of here's the big marble slab, over there is the park, there is going to be a lot more of these things connecting to each other.

And there really will be things that actually, again once the intelligence becomes embedded … So the old way is the old way, they knew it. The people knew it. It was passed on orally, etc. etc. Like artisans of design, all these things existed in people organically. Now the tools, the computing is getting so powerful that the ability to engage with and control in some regard the dynamic movements of ecological systems, naturally because people like them. OK not everybody, but people like to see an array of life and birds and all these things. But kind of how do you do it here? Again, the park's over there, the buildings are over here. We're going to get better at that, so you're going to see more of that interplay. And it's going to make people feel really great actually in the spaces; it just does. It's how we're wired, speaking of context. There are exceptions. "Oh I hate the sunlight." Who's that, Dracula? I don't know. Other people, you know, "I like the sunlight, I like the birds and bees," so that's the normal thing.

I mentioned space age. These things literally relate to being able to and in a sense become experiments for closed environments with really user responsive, computer controlled, programmable indoor air quality and temperature and that include ecological systems in them. Hey, that sounds like living on another planet. I mean, and yeah, there is a big cross over and you're going to see the technology, a back and forth between people venturing into space. I mean literally, not like some day; it's already happening. The lessons learned from living in space are affecting how, or

spending a bunch of time in space, are affecting how one does architecture here on the ground.

I mentioned it a little with the terrorism. There is going to be certain advances in how prepared we are for certain forms of disaster in our buildings. It depends on where you are for how that will relate. But that's a trend.

And then the idea that sort of relates to the modular thing is simple living, requiring something different from our houses than we used to. So more "I want a place ..." because the complexity is through the internet portal basically the access to everything, instead of a big array of books and my own little greenhouse. I mean some people will have that, but that's their hobby, that's their specialty. More what you're going to see is a greater satisfaction with the simple, smaller, more economic environment for actually habitation and living for most people. That again, it's going to be more fulfilling at that as it becomes more customizable, more responsive, etc.

So, it's endlessly rich, context and trends. But I hope you've found this touching on it just a bit, just lifting the lid and peaking in, interesting, inspirational and exciting, really, of what is to come in the field of architecture, even though it's, as we mentioned, sort of evolving beyond itself in these regards.

6. **Context & Trends -** *Special Edition*

Old and the new …

And isn't true that no matter what we do with our spaces, what really makes them ours in large measure is the people that we know, that we shared it with, or some continuity, some recollection, and sometimes yes there is that real dimension of meaning with the space itself. But in large measure I'd suggest it's the experiential space we share, social, people, and meaning. I don't see that fundamentally changing, even if the way we relate to our spaces does and there's an aspect that's more virtual.

Prompted by this sign clearly referring historically to a canal, it's not that we're just going to continue to bury things nor kind of pretty them up on the surface, cool as that is. But rather with our new tools and these values of conservation at times and in place, but actually with our new tools we're going to get good at co-evolving, better at co-evolving with complicated systems. It's something that happened in the past, more unified with our world, and then we kind of had this divorced from it industrial separatization perception. Then it's "oh, what have we done" trying to back off and conserve, not that we always do that by any means. But that version of how not to mess it up is don't touch. I believe we're stepping into a place where we're going to get better at co-creationally co-evolving our spaces, including the complex of relating in a healthy and vibrant way with culture and ecology.

Speaking of context, and speaking of co-evolution, we are part of our own context, and we are co-evolving now by me making this show, you watching this show. Of course we have the quantum equivalent that has been unearthed of the effect of our observation, but it's more than that. And it's a choice. You have a choice. What are we going to trend?

One of the fascinating realities that actually speaks to something more with people is our new styles coming in amongst these existing styles. There are a lot of ways of relating to the conversation, that relationship. One is an abrupt disconnect. The other is really seeking to kind of flatten what's there and build new. And the other is to try to somehow make a meaningful

composition and dialog with what is present. This speaks to our age old dilemma or opportunity of how we relate to our own past and how we relate or rebel against, or whatever we do, generationally. So you see this played out in a design sense in such a pre-existing in-place infrastructure of something like the city.

This one, speaking in those terms, I will say it's not an insult. There are ones that really are kind of a, some kind of a vulgar expression to everything else. Like "oh yeah? I'm doing it my way anyway." This to me is more of a gleeful, it's a bit incongruous, but it's kind of leading the way to what clearly to some degree is going to be following up around it, in terms of height over time it's inevitable one would think. And it is new, but it's kind of blocky; I don't mean ponderous blocky, but rectilinear play is speaking in a certain regard to what is around it. And yet it's not chaining itself to that too much. So I'll put this in the category of youthful, gleeful "watch me, watch what I can do" without an associated hostility, if you will.

The new arising from and amongst the old. Yeah, things change. But more and more retrofit renovation alteration, opening up big glass, crisp clean marketed big business, just there's an element of that that's inevitable. But then you also have this kind of cool thing: the green aspect with the bicycles, corporate sponsored. Hey, whatever works, I guess. Less so in the US, but a lot of other countries are really aggressively moving forward which will have to have a kind of evolutionary effect on the marketplace globally, over time, to a degree. Also the regulations help to keep things much more static than they might otherwise …

And there it is.

Can't keep us down. People build and re-build. And that's a hopeful note amongst some of the challenges.

"Choose your viewing preference."
    A. Punch-Line
So we kind of got to just grab and go.

    B. Low-Fi
So there's just so much to context and trends. And I kind of got caught down a rivulet of one angle or another, and didn't talk about some of the ecological and some of the other bigger picture futuristic things. But guys, there's just not enough time, you know. We kind of got to grab and go here.

C. Rambling Prose

Well there was so much I wanted to get into with context and trends, more than I got into here, delve deeper and look at other specific buildings, you know. But I found myself kind of falling in to where we were, and just, you know, in one grain of sand a whole world, let alone a building, let alone a few buildings, let alone a few block area in a city like New York. So it is. There's more on the ecological, more on the technological, but whether with this particular episode or in fact with the entire series, there's only so much time. And there are a lot of important things to do, and so we kind of got to grab and go, you know.

D. Eco Technical

So there was really so much more I wanted to get into here with context and trends, you know, more with the ecological, more with the technological, more with just the shear number of people and the impact of that, and some of the demographics and the likely trends there. There's just so so much, but we only have so much time, and there's just so much to explore here. So I kind of went with what I saw as I saw it, you know, because there is that aspect of the higher priority is what are we going to do, what are we going to create here next? Kind of just got to grab and go.

7. **<u>Architecture Now</u>**

Welcome to Episode 7 of the Architecture Show: Architecture Now.

Of course, as soon as we say it, it's passing … and now has become then. To understand that is to understand, whether we like it or not, our role at best is one of service in and to something bigger and greater than ourselves, greater finally than anything we now know or that can now be known. It is beyond us now. So it goes. And so, this is Architecture Now, for the future's past, to be used however that may best be used then. This then is our gift to you, our imagined great future, and we hope, pray and direct it may serve as such.

Alright then, moving on. I believe in these shows we have seen all sorts of things of our built environment create and deliver value only when rightly brought together, to become one unified whole, and thereby definitionally of integrity within an encompassing space and ultimately within the greater surrounding universe, of which we are but small parts. Thus, as shown throughout, for our designs to actually deliver on our best intentions for them, this would seem to always entail, in one way or another, fundamentally collaboration and synergistic efforts, transcendent to the individual and finally transcendent even to any group.

Thus let us move forward now beyond this self-professedly relatively isolated vehicle of this show to date into greater combined spaces and dynamic evolving constructions born of this togetherness, directed or perhaps destined, one may think, to be even beyond what we may now imagine for them. This will be The Architecture Show – Interview series in which we will provide our humble baby steps along this angle to enrich a building and developing mosaic from this content. That to me sounds interesting, valuable and fun, and I hope to you as well.

Alright, let's look at something else concerning Architecture Now. Wherever we are, wherever we go, wherever we live, work and play, for our designs and constructions to really be appreciated, to be of real value, to truly be relevant to us, they could be said on one level or another to function as a center. So, a home or a building is a center of sorts of course, but so too is an automobile

moving down the road or a rocket ship flying through outer space. They are centers for our actions and experiences. They are centers for our being.

Also, good design and following construction could be said to successfully become the manifestation or the effective facilitation of a world, a world we want, as best we may approach that in any case. So we may call this by that word "World", or we may seek another term that highlights the necessary resonant interplay of parts, elements, characters, and roles necessary to make our designs really deliver on our intentions for them So the word that I'm proposing here for these purposes is "Community," but I'm not using it in a normal way. As I'm using it here it would apply equally to one person alone in a tiny house, if that had that resonant interplay of pieces and parts, as it would to an area of land for example greater than a thousand acres with say more than a hundred people living and working on it.

So, a new path now, from here forward, will be the creation and development of yet another series that focuses on this crucial function of what I'm presenting as my view of optimally effective architecture to be a center of and a context for "community," but again not in the normal sense of the word "community," but in this different and all inclusive sense of that word relating to space, again even if it's just one person. A home therefore can deliver on that essence of community. So, this new series will be called, naturally enough, Center Communities.

OK, last and certainly not least, I believe we need to specifically address the greater context in which we, people that is, live, and by which we may better thrive, or fall into various states of reduced function, diminished enjoyment, lower quality of life, and weakened health, or worse, into depression, despair, disease and decline. And that context is our surrounding ecological world from which we come, of which we are literally made, and that is the essential fluid matrix, you could call it, of our very survival, physically, yes, but many would also say mentally, emotionally, and perhaps, depending on your worldview, even spiritually. In any case, it is crucial, whether here on the surface of the earth, which is our first natural point of focus of course, but also anywhere our travels may take us, such as into outer space, or on future installations on other planets, or, I don't know, any world beyond, or far afield on, or deep, deep within, our own world. This will be the domain of another series to be produced entitled Æcologos™. The significance of this title will be further explored within the series itself, because we are human and wherever we are and wherever we go, we need a healthy, vital, diverse, robust sustaining ecological context to live and to live well. So how can that be divorced from Architecture Now? To me, it can't, hence this other series.

OK, let's recap what I've gotten into concerning my take, anyway, on Architecture Now:

- First, to understand that "now" immediately becomes dated, to whatever degree; and so this is merely a mark in time, by which, my hope is that it will help us and prepare us to be more ready for whatever may come, and being humble enough to admit that we don't really know what's coming next, which tends to create that focus back on our process and our approach, our attitude you could say, with which we seek to spring forward into whatever it is better. So that all relates to that notion of now, and its fleetingness, and the unknown of what's coming, but not in any way that's weak or less than optimal. Rather we're seeking to optimize that reality of us in time.

- OK second, Architecture Now is crucially collaborative and synergistic; this aspect is to be approached via a new series, the Architecture Show - Interview Series.

- Third, Architecture Now is a center of a working and valued world of our co-creation; this is to be delved into further in yet another series to be entitled Center Communities.

- Fourth, for us, for people that is, Architecture Now must consciously exist and be crafted to fruitfully relate within a healthy and sustaining ecological context, for reasons we discussed before. This will be the domain of another show entitled Æcologos™.

- And finally that Architecture Now still points the way to continuing the practice, practicing the work, and working the discipline to uphold and better design and better build our spaces and places, now and into the future, maybe even taking the entire endeavor to whole new levels. Well, that remains to be seen in our next episode, episode 8 that is, of this, The Architecture Show.

Well, we hope you've enjoyed our explorations thus far. Wishing you all the best in your continued journey through our built environment, I'm Jordan Valdina, Registered Architect and Professional Engineer, signing out. This is the Architecture Show.

– the end –

Appendix

Release Date	Episode	Tag
9/11/17	Series Trailer	
9/22/17	1. What is Architecture	Welcome to the New Fall
10/3/17	2. Why Hire an Architect	Welcome to the beginning of our descent into Halloween
10/9/17	3. The Basics – Part 1	We've discovered Architecture!
10/13/17	1. What is Architecture – *Special Edition*	No reason to be afraid … of Architecture
10/16/17	3. The Basics – Part 2	Arm yourself! … With basic knowledge of Architecture
10/20/17	2. Why Hire an Architect – *Special Edition*	Wondering why opens worlds … in Architecture
10/23/17	4. Primitive Foundation – Part 1	Let's go back to our roots … in Architecture
10/26/17	4. Primitive Foundation – Part 2	Use what you have to build what you want
10/31/17	5. Style & History – Part 1	It's a play of the light, the dark, and the in between … in Architecture. Happy Halloween
11/2/17	5. Style & History – Part 2	Can Architecture save your soul?
11/11/17	3. The Basics – *Special Edition*	Remember those who served our world that serves
11/18/17	4. Primitive Foundation – *Special Edition*	Use what you got to get what you want … in Architecture
11/25/17	5. Style & History – *Special Edition*	Don't stop until you find your true style … in Architecture
12/1/17	6. Context & Trends – Part 1	As we near the end of this year, let's look around and ahead … in Architecture
12/8/17	6. Context & Trends – Part 2	There's more at the door
12/15/17	6. Context & Trends – *Special Edition*	Time is nigh
12/21/17	7. Architecture Now	We tip our hat to those from whom

2017 Sept 22
So I've gotten some feedback on the architecture show I made, having just put out the first episode, and wanted to speak to these good points, for those interested:

- yes it's low-fi, made fundamentally from nothing and without pretension - that's on purpose and is the nature of the platform (some may like, others maybe not)

- it's conversational and naturally unfolding, and not seeking to be a 3-minute flashy video bite - but rather taking the time, while still very condensed actually, to cover the material, however broad stroke and informally

So who's this for? Somebody curious about a general human overview of architecture, not the more detailed and extensive skill sets needed to execute it professionally ...

There will be a number of episodes, in total which will seek to present a comprehensive view on the topic

For those who value such, enjoy!

2017 Sept 19
Dear Community -
It's funny how things happen. I get this inspiration to make a mini show about architecture while so much of serious import and direct effect and damage is happening in the world. So is this show an irrelevance, an indulgence, a distraction, or almost an insult in its efforts to produce that should be directed elsewhere to more urgent and important matters? In one way of looking at it, yes. However now that I'm knee deep in it, I'm to say and parlay it simply as the vehicle I have to use and offer at this time. In the context of greater importance in the world aside from this, which is true, I will frame the possible value of the show even given all that's happening out there like this:

By tuning into a roll-up-your-sleeves-and-just-do-it dimension of architecture, especially highlighted by the informal and conversational delivery of the content, my hope is that it will actually valuably add to the large and growing well we share of collective knowledge and capabilities whereby we are in no way estranged from any aspect of our world. We needn't wait for governments, corporations, non profits, religions, or any

nominal "other" group of people for that matter to coordinate, engage and pick up the pieces, and maybe even participate in a new and unprecedented restoration of the precious fabric of our lives, within and without.

Admittedly, that's only a possibility, and may have little to no tangible traction from this show as such. But given my position, that is my gambit.

Take heart, sleeves rolled up, let's do ourselves and future generations justice by how we rise to these times.

All the best to you and to us -
JV

2017 Aug 20
I've searched and finally found what I'm here to work on and give. It's an informal mini show of sorts, and I'll be announcing its first episode soon!

content
www.anarchitectureshow.us

mission
www.keylifeservices.org

video production
www.orrmediacompany.com