

SAN ROCCO - MISTAKES 2A+P/A on a misprint in *The Architecture of the City* * BARarchitekten on using the wrong program * Wulf Böer on the Grande Arche * Steven Bosmans and Michael Langeder on an instant paradise * Cédric Boulet on Sarah Winchester's house * Paolo Carpi on a silent quarrel between Scamozzi and Sansovino * Asli Cicek on Sinan and Hagia Sophia * Angelo Del Vecchio on Leon Battista Alberti * Kersten Geers on the back of the Seagram Building * Matteo Ghidoni plays with Palladio * Stefano Graziani at the Ferrari factory * Alexander Hilton Wood on Freud and Méliès * Giovanni La Varra on architecture, dynamite and the political establishment * Mathieu Mercuriali on façades * Markus Miessen on participation mistakes * Manuela Morresi on Bramante at Roccaverano * Aaron Moulton reviews an exhibition * Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen proposes a completion of the Seagram block * Saverio Pesapane tells the story of a pool and a lake that are part of the "Great Plan for the Transformation of Nature" * Matteo Poli on a house by Luigi Figini * Filipa Ramos on three mistakes * Sergei Sitar interviews Andrei Monastyrski * Giacomo Summa on *La Bombonera* * Pier Paolo Tamburelli sheds light on the mystery of Snefru's first pyramid * Ioanna Volaki on Hagia Sophia * Andrea Zanderigo on Peter Märkli * with photos by Paolo Rosselli and Giovanna Silva, and a drawing by Alexander Brodsky

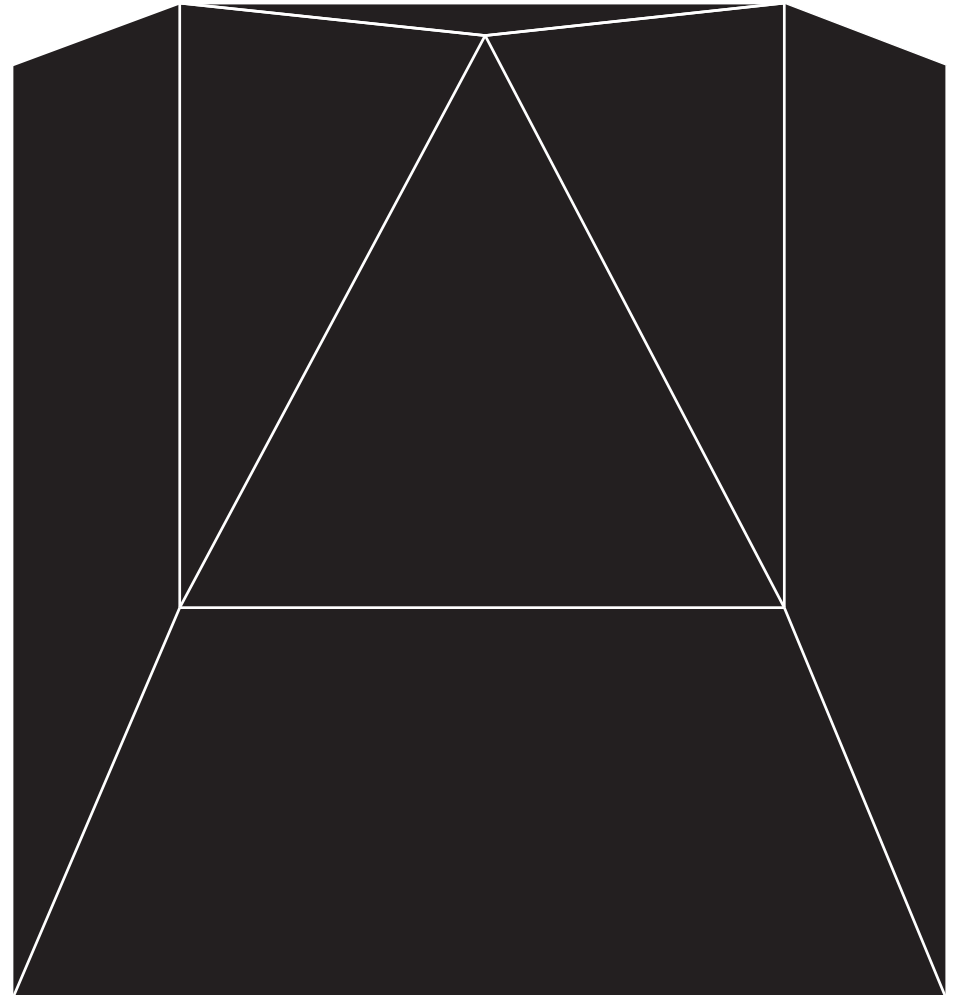
15 €



9 772038 491006

SAN ROCCO - MISTAKES

3 - WINTER 2011



CONTENTS

- 1** **The Wrong Pyramid**
Pier Paolo Tamburelli
- 11** **Editorial**
- 14** **Perfectly Fine for Mies**
Kersten Geers
- 19** **Data Centre on Lexington Avenue**
Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen
- 21** **Beauty and Mistakes**
in the Early Work of Peter Märkli
Andrea Zanderigo
- 25** **Modernistic Neanderthalism**
Matteo Poli
- 30** **Scamozzi versus Sansovino**
Paolo Carpi
- 40** **The Displacement of the Grande Arche:**
The Story of a Surreal Monument
Wulf Böer
- 46** **Santa Maria Annunziata in Roccaverano:**
The Misinterpretation of a Project by Bramante
Manuela M. Morresi
- 55** **La Bombonera**
Giacomo Summa
- 61** **Hagia Sophia versus Hagia Sophia**
Ioanna Volaki
- 66** **Solomon, I Have Outdone Thee!**
Asli Cicek
- 74** **Systematic Mistakes:**
Notes on Leon Battista Alberti's Design
Strategies
Angelo Del Vecchio
- 77** **Review of the Exhibition *Emergency***
***in Favour of Twice* at the Institute of**
Contemporary Art
Aaron Moulton
- 83** **The Wrong Program**
BARarchitekten
- 88** **The Four Books of Mistakes**
Matteo Ghidoni
- 99** **Deliberate Mistakes:**
Stories of the Winchester House
Cédric Boulet
- 106** **Phantoms of Monuments**
Mathieu Mercuriali
- 111** **Freud and Méliès**
Alexander Hilton Wood
- 116** **An "Aesthetics of Mistakes" in the**
Discourse of the "Collective Actions" Group
Sergei Sitar interviews Andrei Monastyrski
- 120** **The Nightmare of Participation,**
or Considering the Value of Failure
as a Proactive Catalyst for Change
Markus Miessen
- 129** **Architecture, Dynamite**
and the Political Establishment
Giovanni La Varra
- 137** **Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better.**
On the Potential of What Goes Wrong
in Relation to Modernism and Art
Filipa Ramos
- 144** **Mitologia Ferrari**
Stefano Graziani
- 148** **Instant Paradise: A Story of Failure**
and Accidental Beauty
Steven Bosmans and Michael Langeder
- 152** **A Lake and a Swimming Pool:**
Two Water Stories from the USSR
Saverio Pesapane
- 160** **A Mistake of Principles: The Principles**
of Architecture Are Eleven and Immutable
2A+P/A
- 164** **A drawing by Alexander Brodsky**
- 169** **Fuck Concepts! Context!**
Call for Papers

SPONSORS
Federica Zanco
Ordine Architetti di Genova

DONOR
Fondazione dEpart

FRIENDS
Luca Astorri
Corrado Beldi
Conrad Bercah
Noel Brady
Marco Brega
BVN Architecture
Cornell University
Maria De Propriis
Ambra Fabi
Monica Cili Calfetti
Penne Hangelbroek
Christian Kieckens
Philipp Luy
Yves Machereel
Patricio Mardones Hiche
Maxwan Architects + Urbanists
Luca Molinari
Luca Montuori
Tom Moss
OBR Open Building Research
Paolo Palmieri
Francesca Pennone
Alessandro Pianetti della Stufa
Cecilia Puga
Marzorati Ronchetti
Italo Rota
Marc Ryan
Samuele Squassabia
SP10 architects
Martin Sobota
Cuido Tesio
UCent-Vakgroep Architectuur Bibliotheek
Ioanna Volaki
Ellis Woodman
Cino Zucchi

and others who wish to remain anonymous

Alberti's architecture – which is the result of a diachronic approach to design – presents itself as an integration of wide-ranging architectural references within a core design concept that is so powerful (although it is less obvious to us today because we read his architecture in the light of the work that followed after it, his work was sensationally new in his day) and simple that deviations, mistakes or misunderstandings in relation to the original idea do not alter the fundamental meaning of his work. On the contrary, later alterations to his buildings only increase the purity of the classical ideal contained within them, they cannot completely conceal it.

The interest of Alberti's logic of architectural design lies not only in his anticipation of the effects of potential changes to his projects over time, but also in his inclusion of them within his repertoire of creative techniques and compositional algorithms *ab origine*.

Thus, the potential architectural “mistake” – which Alberti includes from the very beginning in the range of possibilities generated by his projects – is deactivated, neutralized, annihilated. If irregularity is itself a part of the rule, then how can one distinguish it from the rule itself?

REVIEW OF THE EXHIBITION EMERGENCY IN FAVOUR OF TWICE AT THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Aaron Moulton

Every picture has to exist in the mind before it is put on canvas, and it always loses something when it is turned into paint. I prefer to see my pictures without that muddying.

Marcel Duchamp

A lovely form has been revealed, freed from its functional purpose, therefore a man clearly has made an aesthetic contribution.

Walter Arnsberg

The latest exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art is an intricately woven tale of the found object told through a lost or possibly-never-realized readymade by the 20th century's revered art prankster Marcel Duchamp. The readymade in question is referred to as “Emergency in Favour of Twice”, an English translation of “Crise en faveur de 2 Fois”. The only mention of this work is in a letter from early 1916 that Duchamp wrote to his sister Suzanne while he was living in New York. It is in this same letter that Duchamp first declares the bottle rack as being an artwork and famously coins the term “readymade”.

Nearly all of the early readymades disappeared or were thrown away or lost. Apart from some exhibition copies that were plucked from roughly

similar designs, the readymades as we know them originated in the early 1960s and were replicas produced by gallerist Arturo Schwarz, author of Duchamp's catalogue raisonné. The letter to his sister almost predicted the eventual fates of these early versions, for its intent was to warn her not to discard them accidentally. Duchamp was too late, however, and the early bottle rack, along with “Emergency in Favour of Twice,” went out with the spring cleaning.

The bottle rack was never given a title, a very sacred aspect of any Duchamp work. In his letter to his sister he tells her that he will write her back with what to inscribe as a title but asks her to sign it in his name “(from) Marcel Duchamp”. But he never describes “Emergency”. How could his sister have ever known what she was throwing away? When asked about the title for the bottle rack or a description of “Emergency”, he could never recall. It could almost be said that the lost readymade never existed except in written form.

The curator of the exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art attempted to deconstruct all the aspects of wordplay for which Duchamp was famous and with which he had potentially loaded this obscure piece, waiting for its eventual excavation. The entire museum is broken up into a series of chapters revealing a matryoshka-like universe-within-a-universe that at times borders on pseudo-academics. Each segment of the show delves deeper to address elements inherent to the lost masterpiece. This investigation is compositely sketched through the works of artists from the recent and not-so-recent past ranging from Christian Jankowski to Chris Burden and even Duchamp himself. The viewer is asked to ponder the history, truth and nature of the readymade. Replete with all the necessary clues, the ideas at work are what keep you on the edge of your seat from the first moment you enter the Institute of Contemporary Art.

Crisis of Faith

The most troubling analysis of meaning in the title – and in the introduction to the exhibition – is a direct play on faith itself, or a “crise de foie”. Duchamp’s golden calf becomes tangible, and belief is suspended when contextualized within the archive of the Arts Science Research Laboratory. Portrayed like an anthropology exhibit, the lab was founded by Rhonda Roland Shearer and Stephen Jay Gould. The couple spent most of the 1990s establishing claims that Duchamp had more of a hand in his readymades coming into being than merely pointing and choosing. What is presented is an arsenal of objects: snow shovel, bottle rack, urinal. Each is a potential source “version” of the readymades but of slightly differing designs. Works like *Fountain*, we discover, have no traceable origin or blueprint. Plumbing manufacturer J. L. Mott, who supposedly produced the urinal “chosen” by Duchamp, could never historically prove that *Fountain*, with its subtle intricacies, ever really existed due to the make’s absence from their archive and even from the sales catalogues they had produced at the time. The conspiracy develops into an assumption that Duchamp might have produced a few of these deftly simulated objects and even put them into circulation. Then, as legend has it, he theatrically chose the urinal that became *Fountain* from a group of other equally handmade and identical sculptures. Duchamp biographer Calvin Tompkins eloquently described the artist’s obsession with meticulously remaking his own works. From copies of *Nude Descending a Staircase* to the iconic “replicas” of the readymades, a surgically precise hand was at work, one which, in the biographer’s words, “turned mechanical reproduction into a personal expression”. Early on Duchamp demonstrated a clear understanding of the power of the popular image over the object itself and of how something could

evolve quickly, based on consumption, into an icon. Also on view at the Institute of Contemporary Art is the famous Alfred Stieglitz photograph of *Fountain*, the only proper document of the original. This photo was in itself a carefully staged “event” that, after its reproduction in *The Blind Man*, was sure to place this formerly quotidian object into a pantheon all its own. To further the Doubting Thomas, most everyone from you and me to MoMA and MoCA accepts the idea that *Fountain* and its original siblings have been lost. Yet there is a lack of solid evidence to support the common belief regarding the “selection” process or the provenance of the object itself. The myth is a good one though, bordering on folklore. Alas the research of Shearer and Gould was broadly and publicly dismissed by past and current Duchampians not only because it was sacrilege, but because the theory was full of holes. It is nonetheless an idea that subverts the entirety of 20th- and 21st-century art history, making most of the cultural production of contemporary artists working with found objects, appropriation, etc., rooted in what could be now described as an elaborate hoax. Outside the Arts Science Research Laboratory one finds a vitrine of early sculptural artefacts from performances by Chris Burden – works ironically loaned by the notorious Duchamp referencer Jasper Johns. The lock from his *5-Day Locker Piece* (1971) or the sand and shells from his disappearing to a random island are each tangibly present to tell their tale of origin, complete with Burden’s sober and dry account. Altogether these works neatly illustrate the sacred, reliquary-like status that objects obtain and yet, in the case of Burden, the works provide evidence of performances that can, short of a witness, almost never be proven. A small gallery with a guard and a sign reading “NO MINORS ALLOWED” presented works by artists Carmelo Gavotta, Bola Ecuca and Hamid Piccardo. The rather tasteless range of subjects made even this

writer experience difficulty accepting them as serious art due to their clearly gratuitous and overtly perverse qualities. It felt like someone was trying too hard and their work bore no relation to anything so far seen in the exhibition. The room, which displayed a large banner reading “The First Tirana Biennale” (2001), was presented as a mini group show containing the biennale’s promotional posters of *bukkake* girls or an AK47-bearing Osama bin Laden and curated by Oliviero Toscani, the famously kitsch Benetton photographer. Some twenty minutes’ distance from this room a placard revealed the project as being a work by Tito Mussoni. Ten years ago this little-known artist from Italy concocted a subversive intervention when he managed to curate a section in the First Tirana Biennale by stealing the identity of Oliviero Toscani. He invented the careers and commissions of new work from five artists. He was never caught. Upon learning what I had actually seen, the former feeling of cheap shock warmed to a baffled anger of feeling duped. Nonetheless, the troubling display made for one of the more intriguing and yet, to this writer’s knowledge, totally unknown mythologies of the entire exhibition.

Emergency Look Twice

The multiple meanings of the exhibition’s title divide the Institute of Contemporary Art with a distinct tempo, imagining various takes on the legacy of the readymade. The second part of the show underlined the dilemma that the readymade poses by creating an uncanny rupture with real life, making us do a double-take and deeply consider the alien potential inherent to an everyday object that we might be using on a daily basis – a forced *jamais vu*. The aim is to identify that sudden epiphanic aura of seeing the selected and now-magic version emerging from the camouflage of the many. It became a nice segue to the earlier feeling of being duped, but now duped by *something* rather than *someone*?

I waited in line for fifteen minutes to see films by Leopold Kessler. Expecting to enter sooner than later I discovered that everyone in front of me was an actor paid to wait – a clever but annoying performance piece by Slovak artist Roman Ondák. The work took comical advantage of my desire to see everything and my unquestioning obedience to social structures. The films by Kessler were disturbingly banal. The artist has a habit of dressing like a city employee, the kind you imagine going about fixing streetlights or performing other acts of cosmetic maintenance. Kessler, however, changes things slightly and even introduces elements that you might not otherwise recognize that enhance the function of the given structure while playing into our habits of use, such as, for example, installing perfectly designed locks in the interiors of London phone booths. By means of a simple sleight of hand, he has created a new form of private space in public through a device that no one even notices.

An exploration into the thingness of things was at work here. Christian Jankowski’s *Strip the Auctioneer*



from 2009 is a very funny look at a Christie's auction where, after having sold all the lots, the auctioneer eventually puts the shirt off his back, as well as his socks and shoes, etc., up for bidding. Jankowski's auction lots oscillate between the priceless and the worthless, and they are transcended by a Duchampian alchemy whereby a sock still warm from its wearer becomes a four-figure item of artistic value. The gavel becomes a magic wand that itself takes on value and aura through proximity. Jankowski's work thus frames the visible birth of the contemporary art object.

Liver Sickness

The next linguistic trick in Duchamp's title "Crise en faveur de 2 Fois" is "crise de foie", the French expression for "liver disease", an affliction resulting from having too much sugar, sweetness or, if you like, too much of a good thing. This again reflects the prolific use of the readymade and the way in which its abundance has damaged our visual palette, faulting an inability to recognize a good thing or "the real thing" when we see it.

In the exhibition, a large, chaotic room was strewn with garbage and objects. It was a white-cube apocalypse, a total saturation and collapse of a world now made of Cartesian paper. The garbage, it turned out, was all meticulously handmade by Australian artist Carly Fisher. To a tee, I was looking at things I know so well that I don't look at them twice: junk food wrappers, discarded Coke cans, crumpled cigarette packages. I was now being forced to look at them out of some suspicious condition, a sense of fear or a strange creeping paranoia that the world around me was one big choreographed coincidence of circumstance and props.

Damien Hirst vitrines of medical instruments glimmered in a corner. Sherrie Levine's gold-plated urinals, Robert Lazzarini's psychedelically skewed phone booth, Bertrand Planes's schizophrenic

newsstands and Sturtevant's Warhol flowers all pushed and pulled in different ways. They could have all been IKEA products at that point.

Duchamp himself finally made an appearance with his Rotoreliefs, a prescient harbinger he originally created as post-art products, aesthetic shortcuts or hypnotic optical porn. He first exhibited them at an inventors' fair, selling not a single one to any member of the public. In the exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art, the row of discs spun from a wall mount and literally sucked in the room like a spiraling vortex.



Crisis in Favour of Emergence

The final room in the exhibition did everything to overcome the now daunting legacy that this mode of production has taken on; it was a palette-cleansing reconciliation, especially after the previous room and its implosive ubiquity. For this space, a number of artists were given the playful task of producing their own interpretations of "Emergency in Favour



of Twice". It was a brilliant carte blanche, and one that was, in some cases, well played.

Somebody had to do it, so artist Jeffrey Vallance hired a psychic medium to contact Duchamp and finally describe what our lost readymade looked like. On-screen was a comically stuttering, dusty old man reaching deep and conjuring quotes like "any form is the perspective of another form . . . a chariot made of rods of emancipated metal . . . in the form of a toboggan but more of a corkscrew". Loris Gréaud made a rather hilarious work called *Air of Judgment?* (2011), a direct riff on Duchamp's *Air de Paris*, even using a similar glass vial to hold what was purportedly the breath of a local court judge. Gréaud's wordplay with "err of judgment" brought things appropriately full circle to oblige the visitor to think about the origin of this phenomenon and how it had been historicized.

The young Spanish artist Rubén Grilo contributed something that in all its simplicity burned its way into my memory. It was a form that until now only

existed in the artist's mind. A quivering squiggle on the wall was constantly and palimpsestuously rewriting itself in a green laser projection like an afterimage of some insecure primordial shape. In a similar vein, artist Ignacio Uriarte presented a series of photographs showing configurations of clear plastic rulers. The series presented every imaginable combination, and the results were a dry but curious new language of totemic forms. The glossolalic score from Steve McQueen's video *Once Upon a Time* (2004) echoed from a side room. Myriad images flashed from the Voyager II golden record that would represent a sort of a time capsule for any alien or would-be seafarer who might come upon this indexical account of the human species.

In the corner of the room, the Behring Institute for Medical Research had a salon hang. The Institute is a Dutch organization that began a widespread survey in search of art that could function as a placebo and of placebos that could in fact be art. The project begs many questions regarding how a person experiences an artwork, exactly what it is that they experience which differentiates between art, "art", something otherwise common and non-art, and whether such a differentiation is, in fact, possible. In addition, there were several dozen objects in the room taken from other cultures for which one did not have an immediate point of reference. From Vladimir Archipov's Folk Art Archive of improvised bricolage devices to a private collection of fetish objects, cult icons, out-of-place artefacts and ritual devices, each beautiful and awkwardly alienating, these works somehow brought everything to a conclusion by posing this question: How can we move beyond the readymade, and what does art without reference look like?

The Abstract Expressionists faced a similar dilemma, but with what seems today like easily surmountable odds by comparison. Today's artist operates almost entirely in the realm of reference and employs a

language of art that references art. The path for development leads to a gaping maw of white noise containing everything and nothing, often with dead ends of conceptual arithmetic. Yet an eventual endgame is in sight, and maybe this is, in fact, the real crisis. In this way, works like the Grilo laser piece, while not what I imagined the lost readymade to look like, achieved something rare through the art of disengaging and letting the act of creation drift into a realm in which the Surrealists and Abstract Expressionists first broke ground but to which we have not found a sincere way to return without the security of mannerism and loaded parentheses. One could surmise that Duchamp, aware of how his actions might be interpreted by future fans, set this all up as one of his many games full of clues, dead ends and intrigue – maybe his last great game. *The Green Box*, his immense treasure map to *The Large Glass*, certainly makes you wonder whether such a forensic strategy of planting the devil in the details was happening everywhere all along, forcing us to do a double-take at his every word. The “copy” had a different, almost performative meaning for Duchamp, one that related more to the nature of the word and referred not only to serializing, but even to mimicry and sublimation. As a whole, the exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art functions simultaneously as a conspiracy theory, a litmus test and a crystal ball, revealing the threadbare psychological paradoxes of the readymade. With a precise handicraft and an alchemist’s desire, Duchamp’s readymade penetrated the thin membrane of the retinal function of art, thereby releasing a flood of potential for future generations. And yet with this lost readymade he even broke the bond binding the idea to the form and, one could say, to the reference. Now one must discern whether his legacy is based on what is written, on an elaborately mistaken identity or on a possible hoax.

Emergency in Favour of Twice

Institute of Contemporary Art

1 April–2 August 2011

Participants: Marina Abramovič, Vladimir Archipov, Arts Science Research Laboratory, Behring Institute of Medical Research, Alighero Boetti, Chris Burden, Roisin Byrne, Maurizio Cattelan, Roberto Cuoghi, Marcel Duchamp, Bola Ecuá, Carly Fisher, Carmelo Gavotta, Loris Gréaud, Rubén Grilo, Damien Hirst, Christian Jankowski, Leopold Kessler, Oliver Laric, Robert Lazzarini, David Levine, Sherrie Levine, Steve McQueen, Tito Mussoni, Roman Ondák, Hamid Piccardo, Bertrand Planes, Gedi Sibony, Situationists International, Alfred Stieglitz, Sturtevant and Jeffrey Vallance

THE WRONG PROGRAM

BARarchitekten

In 1995, we started drawing with pixels on the computer using the program SuperPaint.

This was a mistake: it was the wrong program for architects to use. So why didn’t we start using one of the vector-based CAD programs that were already standard issue for architects? It was partly due to a lack of resources (acquiring the software and hardware was expensive), and partly due to a lack of knowledge (none of us had worked in established offices that used CAD, and we had finished our education just before the widespread adoption of the technology). As important, perhaps, was our unwillingness to simply follow the same path that most other architects were taking. One of the luxuries of living in low-rent Berlin shortly after the fall of the Wall was being able to look askance at conventional practice: the world of CAD seemed irredeemably associated with the bad buildings being built in the centre of Berlin. There was also the beguiling simplicity of using SuperPaint. Unlike the daunting and unintuitive complexity of a CAD program, which appeared to require an entirely new way of thinking, SuperPaint was just a new way of putting lines on a white surface, eliminating the inconvenience of drafting with rapidograph pens. We had always admired Ludwig Leo’s extensive use of the one-millimetre pen in his drawings of the 1960s and 1970s, and now we could produce thick lines and black fills with no risk of smudged ink.

While our contemporaries worked at the somber screens of AutoCAD, we cheerfully nudged pixels around the small black-and-white screens of our Mac Classics, as if we were playing a primitive computer game. At a high zoom, working with SuperPaint became more like arranging a mosaic of black and white tiles than drafting. The