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A friend once remarked that, "the best part about traveling, is meeting other travelers, sharing stories, and experiencing life with them."

The 'super'global hotel. Restructuring the 'type' for the future.

To look forward we must understand what's behind us. In contemplating what an international hotel in the future might come to be I decided to investigate the beginnings of the hotel typology that I commonly saw in downtown Toronto, that of the podium and tower. This investigation led me to considerations of how that typology might be restructured under new considerations and design ideas, provided by other building types, to liberate a new and more communally driven typology. The following is a chronological account of that process and its resolutions.

The hotel as a recognizable typology did not come to fruition until the mid 1900's. According to Hans Ibelings, in his text Supermodernism: Architecture in the Age of Globalization, the modern hotel of the post-war era advanced as the first authentic example of world architecture (Ibelings, 33). The development of an 'International Style', as portrayed by the modern hotel paradigm, occurred in correspondence with the conscious formation of an acute perception of 'internationality'. During the late modern era of the 1950's and 60's there was an increased sense that conditions were similar worldwide and that a singular architectural style could accommodate projects around the globe.

This phenomenon is largely due to the creation of new international practices founded by transplanted European architects such as Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, and others. Collectively these architects helped to institute the International Style which would generate analogous design logic around the world, allowing for the creation of a specific convention for the modern hotel. The construction of Americanized hotels on every continent around the globe during the 1950's and 60's is the justification given by Ibelings for deeming them "the first true exemplars of world architecture" (Ibelings, 34).

The emergence of the modern American hotel type during the mid-twentieth century is said by Ibelings to be directly at the intersection of modernity and internationalism (Ibelings, 34). He asserts that despite the fact that hotels built worldwide during this time were owned by different corporations, they are qualified as having belonged to a single large American chain due to the congruency in their design.

The recognizable hotel typology is defined by its generic block podium and double loaded corridor tower. This typology, although with modified proportions exists throughout Toronto. Some examples can be seen in the image below in Figure 1.0 - Existing Hotel Typology. Regardless of façade style, these hotels present a typical design standard, which pose similar problematic urban issues at the ground plane and in terms of public space.



Figure 1.0 - Existing Hotel Typology

In the future the typology of the hotel must be redesigned to better suit a changing culture. The design brief for the Hotel 2055 Competition, Hospitality Transformed: Resort Hotels in 2055 notes, "advances in technology, the easing of international relations, and greater economic opportunities will allow the traveler better access to more areas throughout the world. Exposure to other cultures and languages will surely encourage the traveler to go and experience these cultures firsthand" (Competition Brief, 1). In addition to this the outline emphasizes that the fastest growing sector in the hospitality industry is timesharing and split ownership.

Using these considerations as starting points, we can imagine and extrapolate that, in the future, increased travel and semi-ownership will develop into an intensified global culture. Global citizens will have partial ownership of many residences around the world, and will not be linked to any one place. People will conduct work and communicate via the internet, as satellites broadcast free wireless

internet to everywhere on the earth. Physical ties will begin to evaporate and this new nomadic global culture will exist in an ephemeral state of shifting.

As a result, the nature and typology of the hotel must reconfigure and readapt. It can no longer be a tower of rooms with isolated individuals, with little or no connection to the people and city which surround them. The hotel must become a place of gathering and interaction in the city, a space of visual and aural spectacle that will act as a vortex in a liquid world. Individuals, from around the world, will come together and interact with the local culture, in an intensified social atmosphere. The proposal for Hotel 2055 achieves this resolve by embracing communal gathering over indulgent individualism.

The design solution I submitted to the competition considered many examples of multi unit dwelling building types. After a study of modern hotels, including Japan's pod hotels, I decided to focus on multi unit residential buildings with designs that embraced a form of democracy between units and a focus on public/communal space. I found some of the most evocative examples in new forms of student housing

Figure 2 - MIT Student Residences



and social housing. Steven Holl's, Simmons Hall Student Residence building at MIT in Massachusetts proved to be one of the most important. See image above in Figure 2 - MIT Student Residences. The 350 bedroom residence provides a new model for living. Holl's design "combines city and campus forms" (Marsilio 184) forming a hybrid of residential blocks with a theatre, restaurants, and cafes which spill onto the street. "Hallways are designed as public places, while the 11' wide corridors are like streets connecting parts of the city" (Marsilio 184). The building is also punctuated by internal vortexes, see Figure 3 - MIT Student Residences, that combined with the hallways create a series of areas of varying scales of public space within

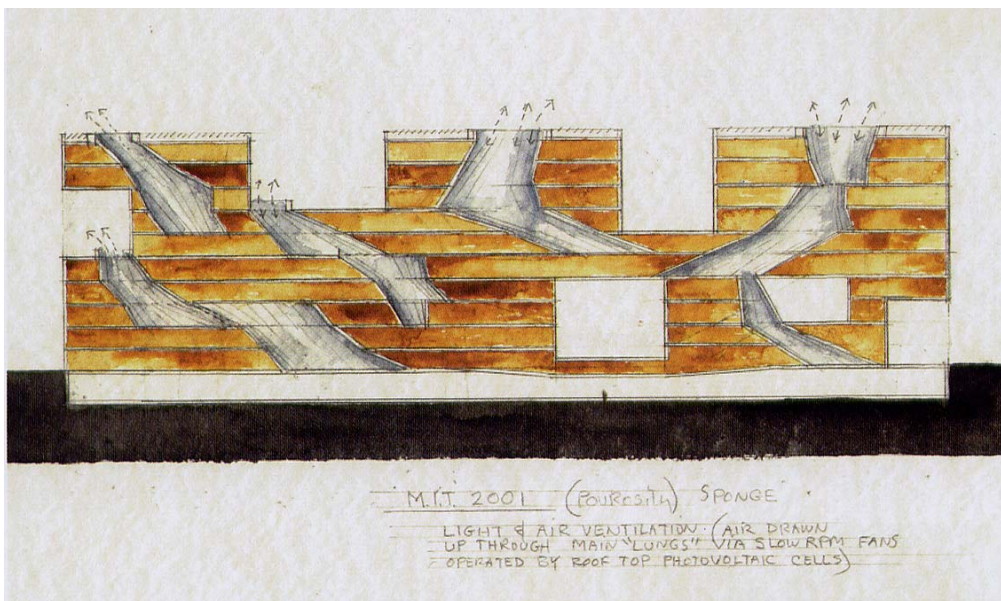


Figure 3 - MIT Student Residences

the building that allow for students to gather and interact. In addition the porosity of the design minimizes its massiveness and allows for a unique level of connectivity between the residents.

In Tokyo, the Codan Shinonome Housing project completed by Riken Yamamoto and Field Shop in 2003 also employs many strategies that proved relevant to my competition submission. See images in Figure 4 aside.

The design places the residential units on the upper floors combined with communal spaces that overlook the central plaza. The first two levels are programmed around a terraced

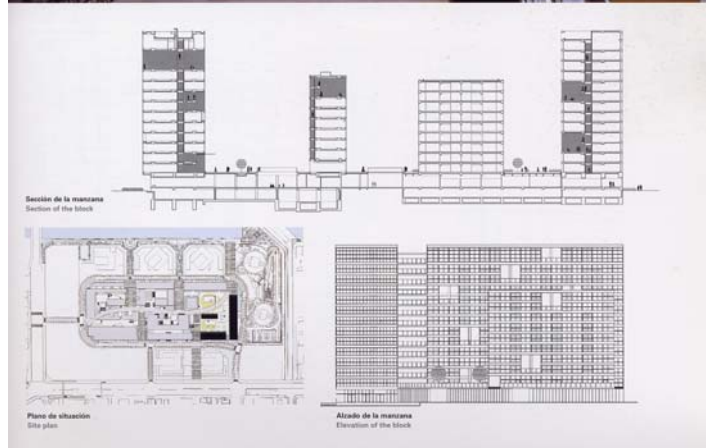


Figure 4 - Codan Shinonome Housing Project

artificial ground plane with assembly rooms, small offices, commercial stores, children's clubs and other facilities that support urban living. These areas mediate the connection between the plaza and the surrounding streets, while facing onto the urban plaza. Incorporated into the design are hundreds of variations in residential units.

"Lifestyle of urban dwellers vary so much that a conventional residence cannot meet the functions they desire" (Yamamoto and Shop 120). As a result 'foyer spaces' are used as flexible areas within the residential blocks. Designed to accommodate, these foyer rooms have moveable walls that can be adjusted to suit a variety of lifestyles and cultures.

The concepts discussed in these precedents provide the secondary point of departure, combined with the discussions of typology and

considerations for the future. The site for the project is the southeast corner of the intersection of Spadina Avenue and Adelaide Street in Toronto, Ontario. Beginning with the most common hotel typology the elements are identified and reconfigured to create a semi enclosed gathering space embraced by semi public space on three sides. See Diagram below in Figure 4 - Typology Study. The blue colour represents semipublic space that is found in the existing typology.

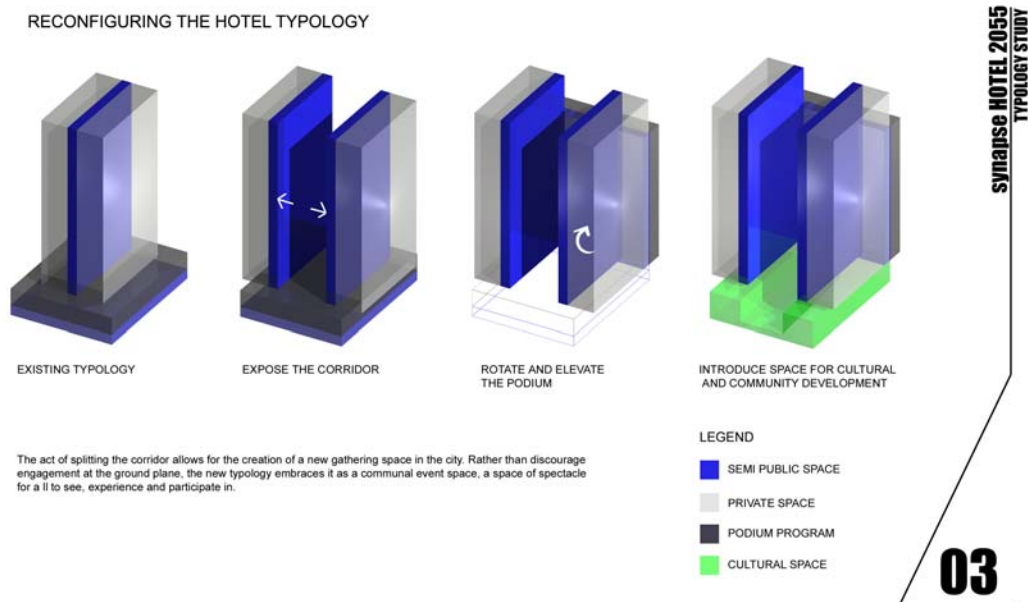


Figure 5 - Typology Study

The act of splitting the corridor exposes this semi public space to the exterior world, and creates a void. The next step involves rotating the podium and exposing its semi public under belly of shops, restaurants, and cafes in a stacked vertical fashion. The resultant space forms the locus of the project and a nexus for the surrounding area. Once the generic parts have been reassembled, they are elevated and culturally programmed space (not required by the competition) is inserted above and below the ground plane, creating a hybrid structure between hospitality and public institution.

The cavity which is formed as the pieces are reassembled acts as a new space of interaction, between the public and hotel residents. The new cultural space that dominates the ground plane is programmed with retail stores, an art gallery, and a community theatre. In the void communal balconies and exposed corridors, inspired by Steven Holl's residence, provide spaces where residents can gather, socialize, and act as voyeurs and participants of the activities which take place in the central court. The public corridors line the residence blocks and span the void, connecting the two residence blocks and creating an intensified space of connection.

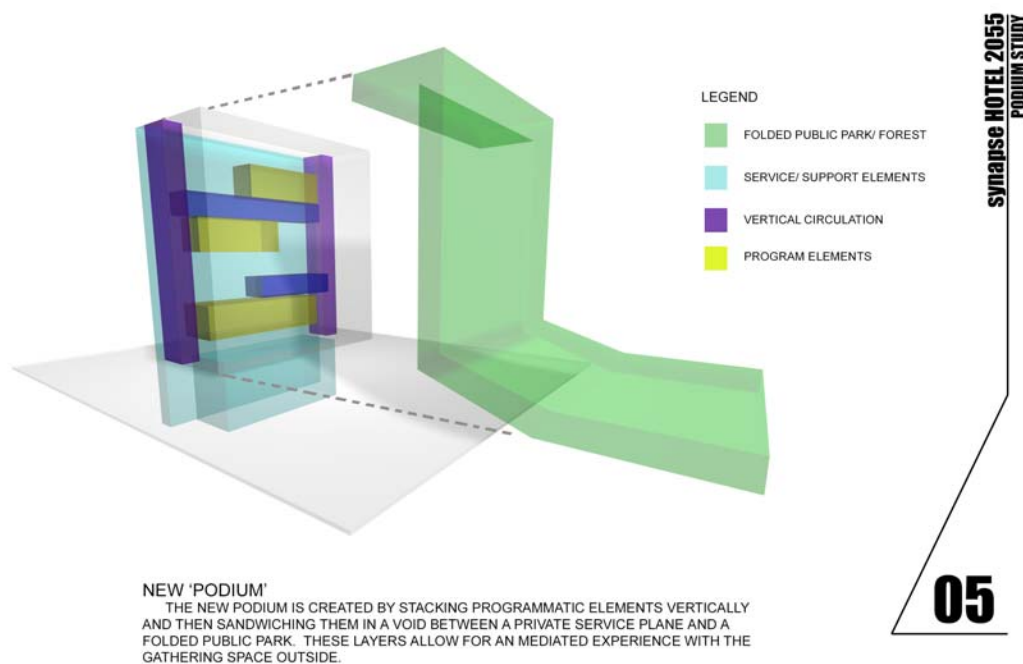


Figure 6 - Podium Study

The previously mentioned podium becomes the new 'podium', a vertically concentrated set of stacked program. See Figure 5 - Podium Study above. The new podium mediates its relationship with exterior gathering space with a façade that is composed of a vertical public park.

Stemming from the ideas displayed in the Tokyo housing projects, the hotel rooms were designed to maximize flexibility and adaptability. Beginning with a basic singular module, a system was established that allows for multiple units to be added depending on the spatial needs of a household. See Figure 6 - Modular Room Study below.

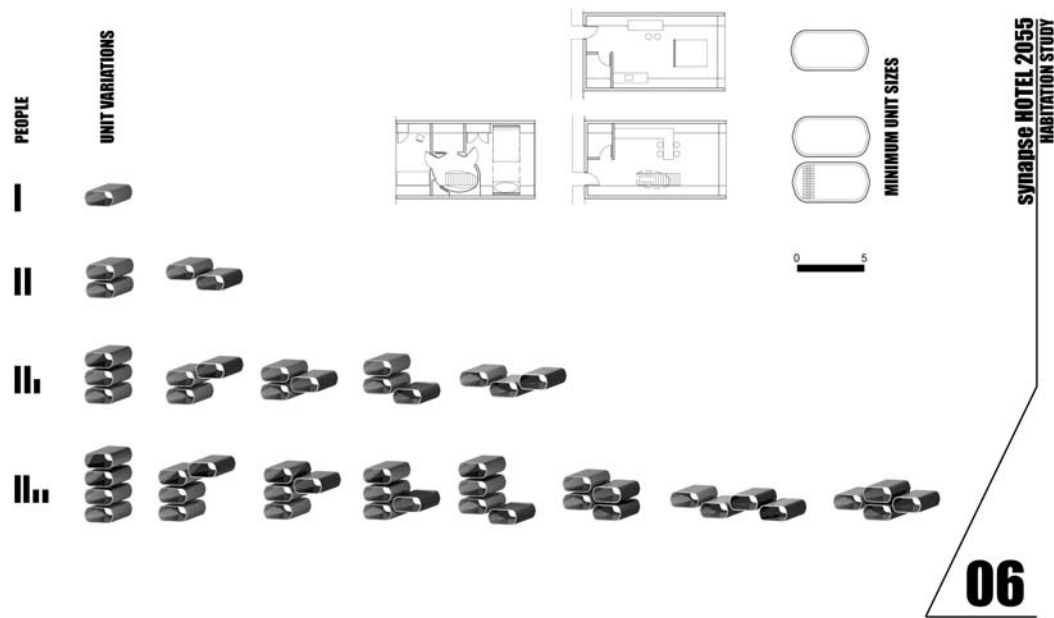


Figure 7 - Modular Room Study

This concept allows for multiple configurations in unit style but also results in elevations that become metamorphic as needs change. See Figure 7 - Elevation Configuration Study below. By staggering the units rather than simply aligning them, the pods fit into an inherently strong honeycomb structure.

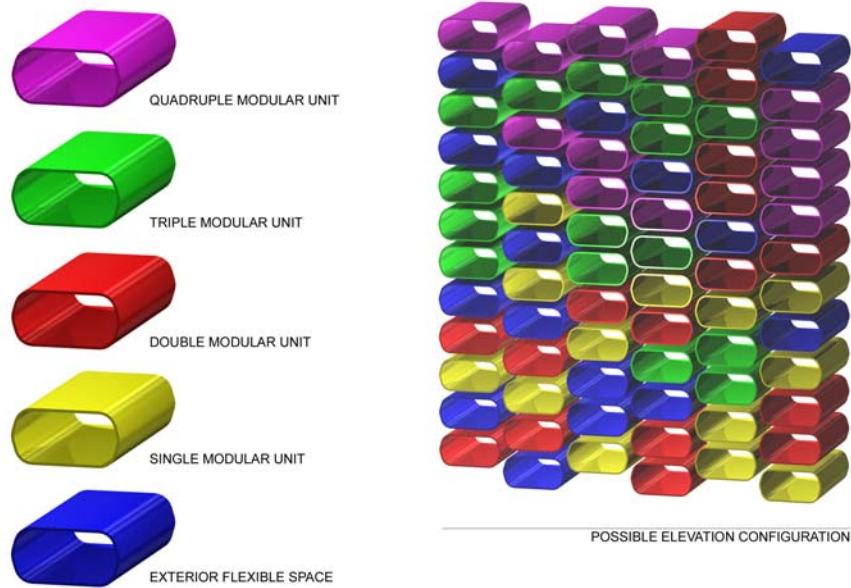


Figure 8 - Elevation Configuration Study

Figure 8 - Exterior Perspective, shows the realization of these combined ideas in a view off of Spadina Ave.



Figure 9 - Exterior Perspective

My submittal to the Hotel 2055 competition sought to revise the hotel typology that has dominated most of the world over the past 50 years. The study of this typology revealed severe problems in terms of public space with these structures and ground planes which were dominated by the automobile. The resolution I came to address these issues by creating a hybrid structure that used concepts from student housing and social housing projects to reconfigure the typology. The new typology returned the ground plane to the public, while at the same time creating a new multilayered and stacked urban space for both the public and the residents to interact and experience various seasonal events. This new hotel typology focuses on adaptability and can be applied in many cities to create new dynamic vertical formations of public space, while still achieving the necessary goals of a typical hotel.

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