

CAZA

Start-Ups

2012

As a start-up, we have no history. Everything around us looks like the future.

What then is innovation for a young office? Is it supposed to be incremental or disruptive? Are we expected, as newbies, to drive the revolution?

We understand our contribution in terms of averted failures. Innovation forces us to the brink. As a small, fledgling office we will inevitably fail often and fail fast. We aspire to turn this reality into a means of dodging the formulaic. In fact, if we cannot see the precipice in front of us then we need to find a way of working that facilitates flight.

Innovation, for us, is empathy: a chance to imagine new ways for being close—closeness with someone else's desires. What do we long for? Where do we find the will to design? Perhaps a longing for something shared keeps us working. Architecture might, after all, be the original pre-digital social media.

Architecture is a sport of half-blind engagement—almost unnatural. Like a boxer, you look left when you want to hit right. Our power comes from our oblique stance vis-à-vis the client. We are neither developer, nor user but yet we are saddled with the responsibility to think of alternatives. How about this? Why not that? We are the informants of alteriority.

Architectural thinking, in this sense, involves the consideration of norms in an attempt to produce something that goes beyond these very limits. We love parameters only to break them. We are continually impressed by systematic excess. We are, therefore, implicated in the production, management and coordination of sovereignty within an otherwise corked economic system (real estate) which in turn tries to predetermine form.

Our optimism rests in the conviction that our work is a kind of gift to the client. By clients, we imagine a big expanding bubble of personalities that want change but also want it in a way that is physical. They cannot be intimidated by ideology. They are looking for the unfamiliar. In fact, they will welcome the crepuscular at noon if the form of the light is right.

Our fiduciary duty is never to abandon form. Our profession's heroes

expanded the possibilities of making. We must take control of our tools and produce a new advanced craft—become masters of our instruments and in so doing redefine the trade in terms of our objects.

We are paid by clients who want something they do not know is there. Why such an absurd mission? Because we look for innovation in the points of tension. Problem-solving is not our primary task. Satisfactory solutions cannot propel real change. We listen for conditions that startle in the hope of reframing the relationship of the social body with the physical context of the city.

We seek out patterns of working that enable us to gleefully amble around the garden of unfinished paths in search of new ideas.