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REALITY AND BEYOND

MATTER SPACE STRUCTURE

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In a world of replicas, there is a preoccupation with comparison to the original. Digital tools allow us to change the natural order of materials, textures, and colours, to the extent that the replica becomes unrecognisable from the original. This process can easily become a matrix of illusions, where the real and the imagined become entangled and produce something so far from the original object that it is considered hyperreal. Through the act of transforming diverse spatial representations, this thesis explores the possibilities that lie in the transformations of the original and its replicas and utilise it as driver for design work.

This approach stems from the theoretical work of French theorist Jean Baudrillard, whose theories concerning the value of the replica, suggests that we live in a time of hyperreality. According to Baudrillard, hyperreality is achieved when the copy is more real than the original (Baudrillard, 1994). Baudrillard's theory predominately concerns mass media and the image, both of which are applicable to architecture, however the aim of this thesis is to explore the possibilities of Baudrillard's theory applied to the mass that lies beyond the image.

The thesis departs from images of a historical building in Melbourne, Australia, that are compounded into a three-dimensional model, based on the software's interpretation of reality. The most characteristic details of the model are then further explored through a series of modifications (including distortion, draping, extrusion, mesh alteration and extraction). The material is then morphed to the degree where it develops its own architectural aesthetics and qualities and can be used as a pallet of abstracted building components for the reconfiguration of the building's hyperreal counterpart. This process is then reversed, allowing the inherent qualities of the hyperreal to be explored.

The outcome is a design methodology that challenges the way architects utilise the image as a design tool. It allows the digital interpretation of reality to become an integral part of the design process, recognising glitches as a tool to expand the limits of referencing. The anticipation is that this method could serve as a tool for reconstruction processes in the future.

Keywords: Hyperreality, replica, image