new body

a church in hong kong

Diploma 2017
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INTRODUCTION

The Kowloon City Christians' Church (九龍城基督徒會) was found in 1942 in Kowloon City (九龍城) in Hong Kong (香港). At the beginning there was only a small group of people. They changed the gathering place for a few times in Kowloon City and finally have their own building in 1954. At the same year, the church also started a school called Christ's College (基督書院). In the weekday, the building is a normal school but in the weekend it becomes a gathering place of the church. Both the church and Christ's College grow though years, and Christ's College moved out in 1990. In 1992, Cornerstone Education Center (基石進修中心) was founded. And the church start sharing the building with Cornerstone until now.

The building was a two storeys school building when it was built in 1954. In the 60s, the third floor is built to handle the rapid growth of both the church and the school. There was a few minor extension and changes happened through these years. One of the biggest change is the removal of the partition walls of the classrooms in ground floor. That space became the hall and chapel of the church, the most important room in the church.

Recently, after a building inspection, there is a discussion in the church about rebuilding, because the structure is aging and it is not safe.

Kowloon City Christians' Church and Christ's College, 1954

The Kowloon City Christians' Church was the church I went regularly with my family in my childhood. Both the district and the church play an very important role in my childhood. I have a strong bond with the people in the church, the church itself and also the church as an architecture. In these year the district is changing constantly, the demolition of Kowloon Walled City (城寨), moving of the Kai Tak airport (啟德機場), the death of 'King of Kowloon' (九龍皇帝), the aging population, immigration from Thailand... Kowloon City was an important part in Hong Kong, but now it is being forgotten. The old was gone but nothing new happened, the district is aging and dying.

Same as the district, the building of the church grow old. It is 51-year-old now(2017). The structure is much weaker than before, it is rotting and decaying. It is falling apart.

In January, 2010, a fatal accident happened at Ma Tau Wai Road (馬頭圍道). A 55-year-old building collapsed. Four people died and two were injured in the 10 seconds collapse. This building was located in the same district with the church. The old church have to be replaced or repaired. My interest in this project comes from my memory and the bond with the church. I wish to use the memory, the bond and the church itself as fuel to generate an architecture for people who share the same memory with me.

Aircraft landing at Kai Tak airport, Kowloon City in the '90s

RESEARCH QUESTION

a.

'It would be senseless for the author to try to convince the reader that his characters once actually lived. They were not born of a mother's womb; they were born of a stimulating phrase or two or from a basic situation. Tomas was born of the saying "Einmal ist keinmal". Tereza was born of the rumbling of a stomach.' by Milan Kundera

Using literature, metaphors, 'a stimulating phrase or two or from a basic situation' to create a space, an architectural language or a typology, and project these to an practical architecture program.

b.

'A House dies twice- the first time when people leave it... The second time finally when it's destroyed...' by Brodsky & Utkin

The church is going to die not because people leave it, but simply because it is getting old and a new body is needed. The project is to create a new body for the church. The memory, history and the spirit will be project on the new body. These will generate an new architecture, and the new architecture will be a memorial of itself.
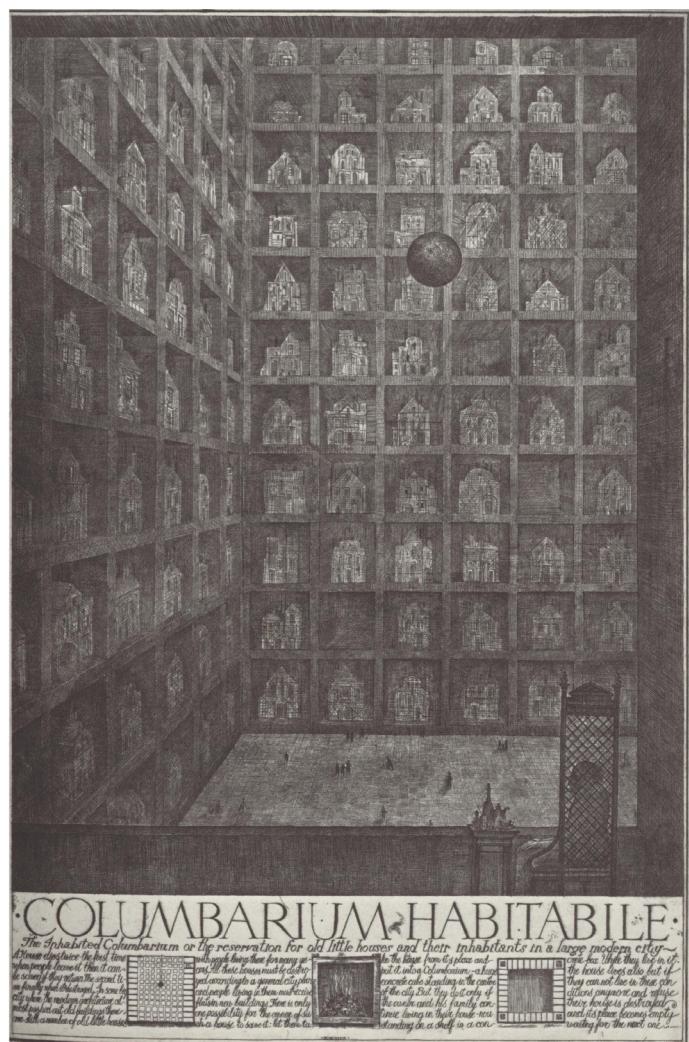
Columbarium Habitabile 1989/90 by Brodsky & Utkin

APPROACH

The diploma is a design research.
Start from 'new body'(metaphor) and aim to the church(project).

'Semantic river: each time the same object would give rise to a new meaning, though all former meanings would resonate (like an echo, like a parade of echoes) together with the new one. Each new experience would resound, each time enriching the harmony.' by Milan Kundera

We all have our own interpretation on our vocabulary. What we experienced gives the unique semantic meaning to the word. The meaning can be abstract or concrete. It is hidden behind and waiting to be discovered. Every word is a metaphor, and at the same time every word have a metaphor.

The research is to release the abstract or concrete meaning behind the word, enrich it and use it to generate the architecture. Or project it to the church(project). During the process, new meaning might be created and used.

Start from 'new body'(metaphor) and aim to the church(project).
Through the process of creating drawings, models and text, a space or an architectural problem or solution will be developed and projected to the practical situation.

1. Searching of the 'new body'
2. Project the 'new body' to the practical situation
3. Find the architectural language and form from the 'new body' and practical situation
4. Coming back and forth between searching of 'new body' and the practical situation, until the architecture is found.
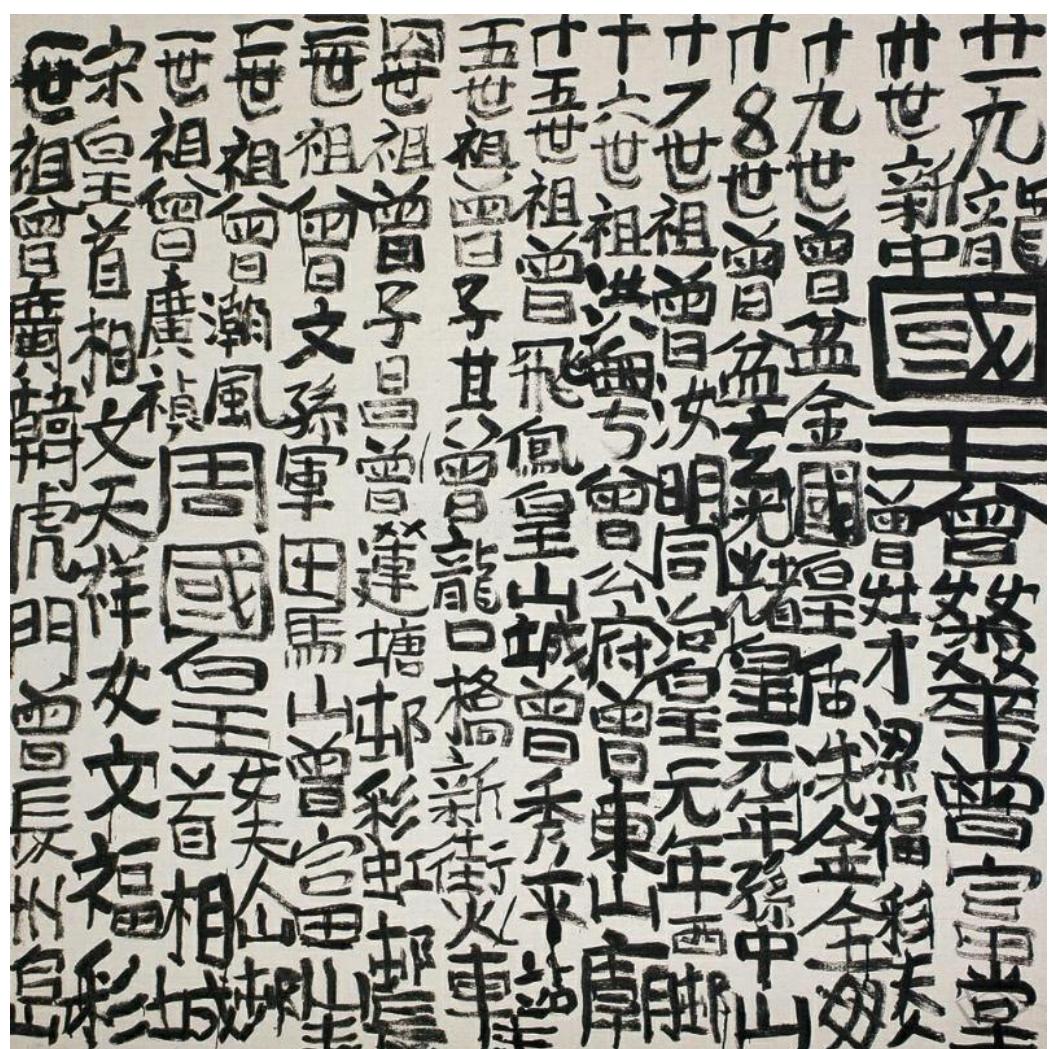
Calligraphy Graffiti of Tsang Tsou Choi, 'King of Kowloon'

WORK PLAN

Stage_01	Searching for the mood
Stage_02	Research of site and programs
Stage_03	Repeat Stage 01
Stage_04	Repeat Stage 02
Stage_05	Spatial experiments
Stage_06	Repeat Stage 01 02 05
Stage_07	Building organization
Stage_08	Final Production

REALITY SITE

The site is in Kowloon City in Hong Kong. The site is in a urban situation, in one of the oldest district in Hong Kong. Not far from the site is the Kowloon Walled City Park, which was the former Kowloon Walled City. In the street where the church locates, there is a refuse collection point, post office, restaurants and vehicle repair garages.

Kowloon City is very close to Kai Tak International Airport, it was one of the busiest airport in the world before it was closed and replaced by the new Hong Kong International Airport at Chek Lap Kok(赤鱲角) in 1998. The building height in this area(including the site) was strictly restricted. It was very common to see large aircraft flying overhead very closely in Kowloon City.

Hong Kong, Kowloon and Kowloon City
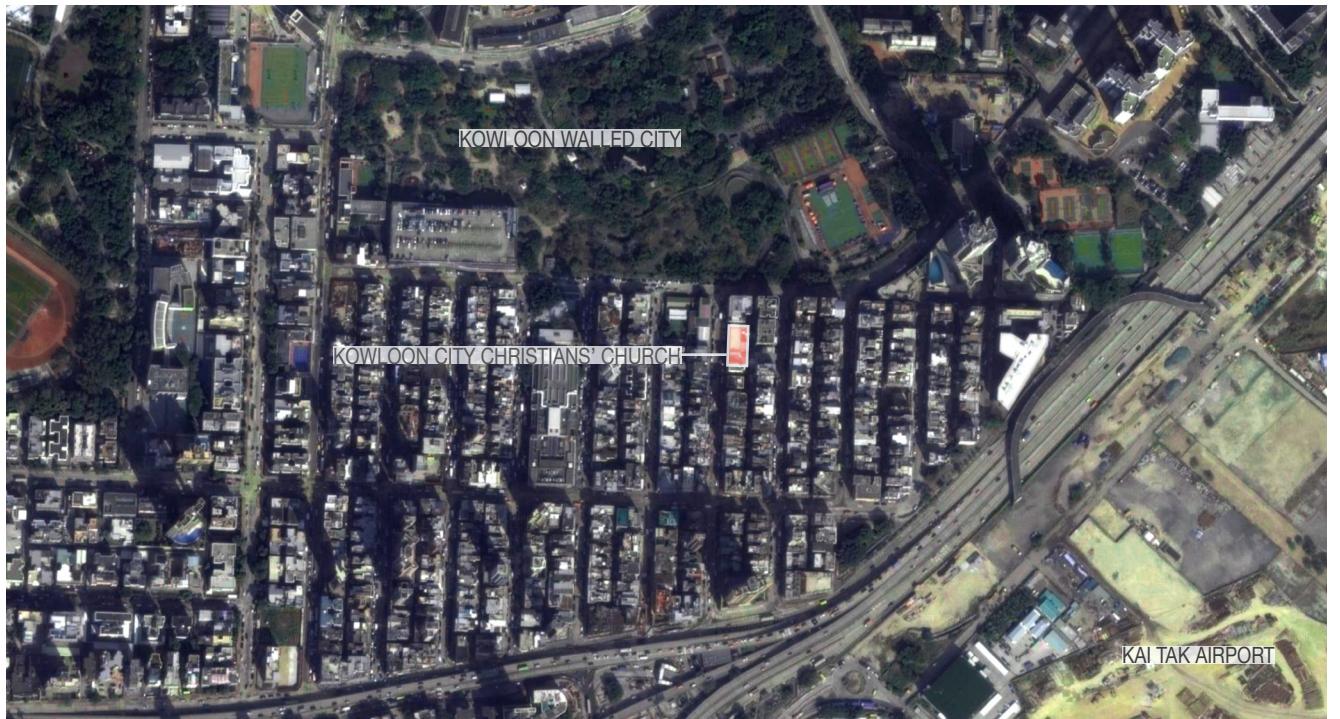
The Site and the Context

PROGRAM TYPOLOGY AND SPATIAL BRIEF

A Church in the weekend and a school in the weekday. The building is a three storeys multi function building in currect state. It has a built area of 550 m² each floor.

Rooms for the church :
- Office
- The chapel
- Pray room
- Choir room
- Mini library

Rooms for the school :
- Reception
- Office
- Classrooms

Rooms for both :
- Courtyard
- Playground

Existing Building Plan

Existing Building Elevation
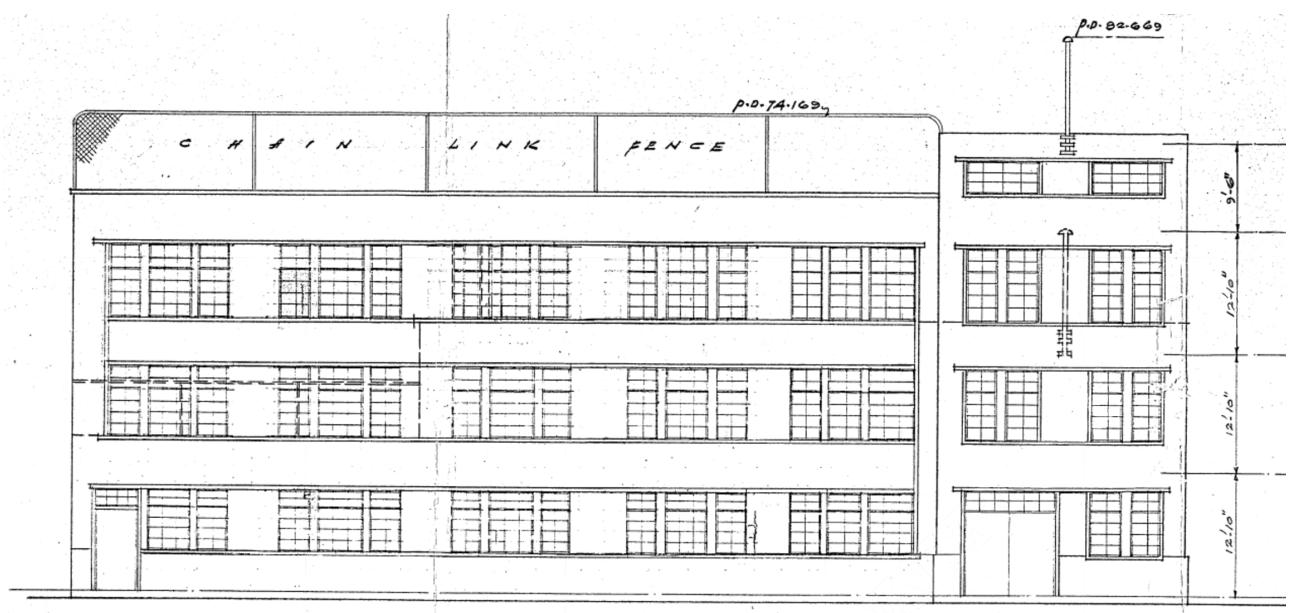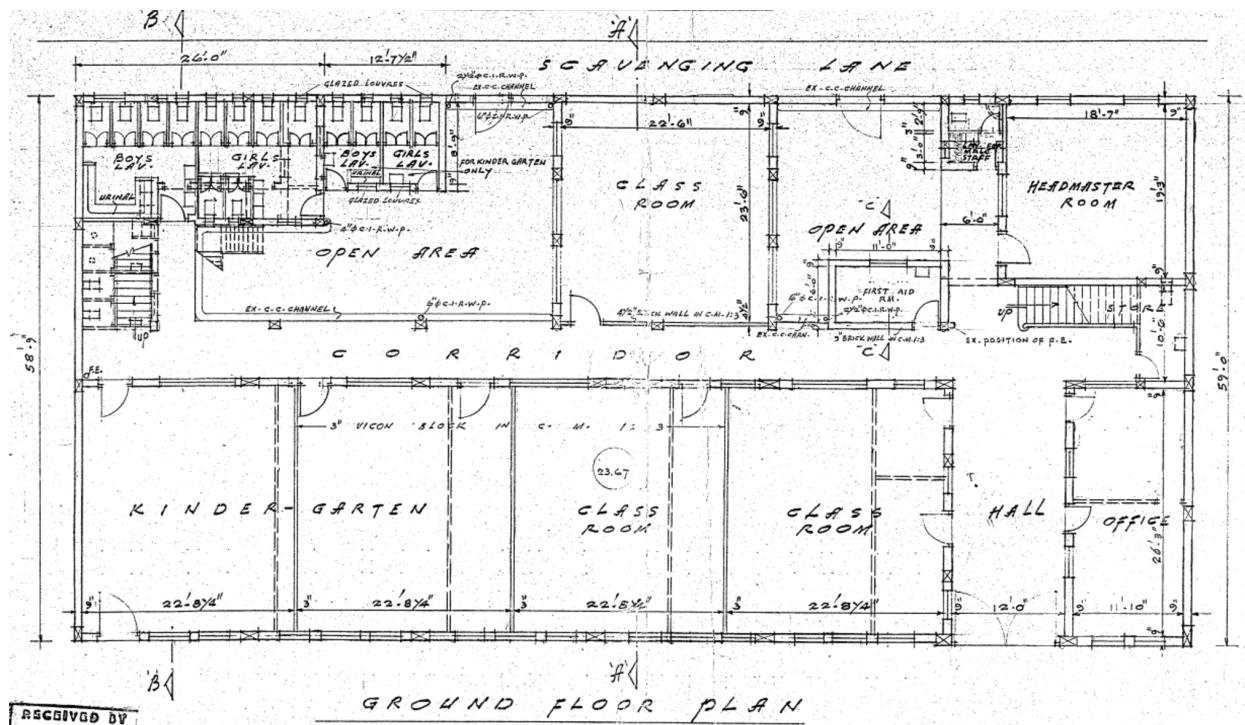
SUBMITTED MATERIAL

001.	Site map 1:1000
002.	Situation plan 1:500
003.	Site model 1:500
004.	Mood models
005.	Sketches
006.	Text
007.	Spatial models
008.	Sketches
009.	Text
010.	Final model 1:50
011.	Plans 1:50
012.	Sections 1:50
013.	Elevations 1:50
014.	Key Detail 1:10
015.	Images
016.	Text

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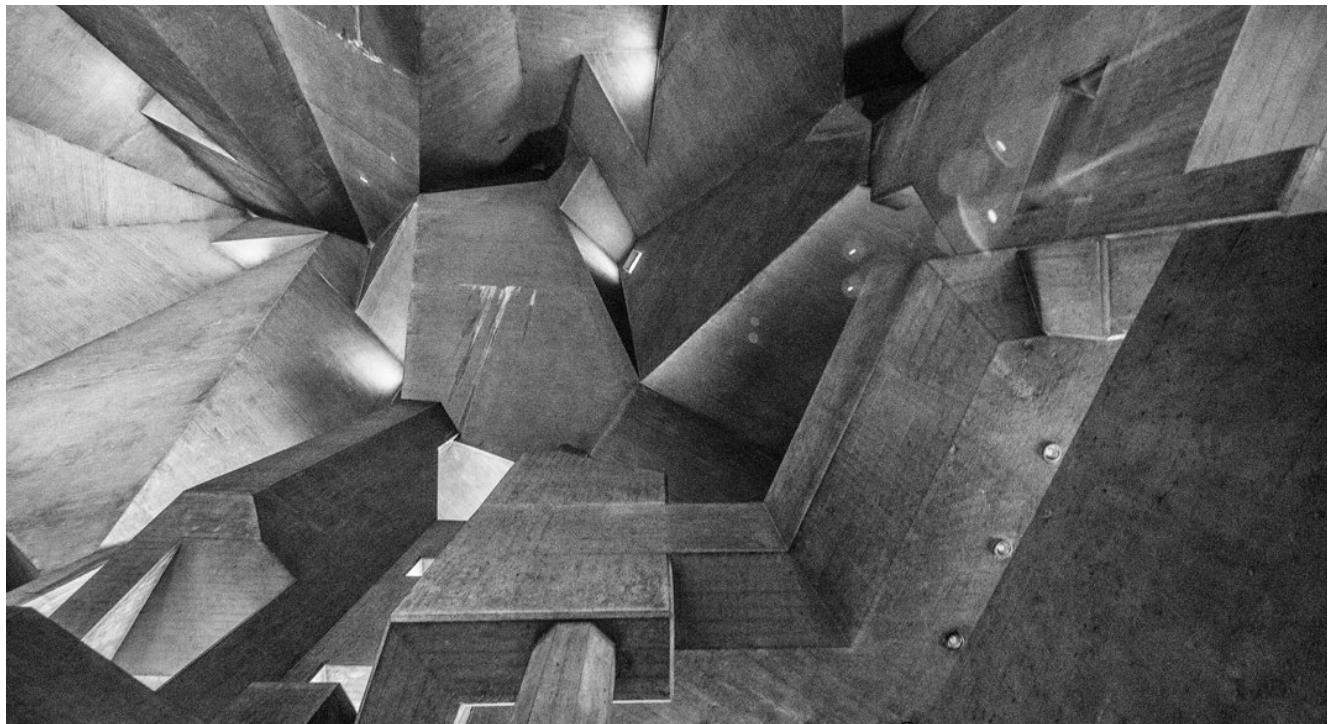
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