

of ten, thus classifying knowledge into defined numbered branches. By scattering the rose petals in the storm, the project acts as a critique of taxonomy. It replaces the 'tree model' with a system embracing indeterminacy.

THE ROSE HOUSE

The map of the 300 metre long line of petals contained the following elements:

- 1.) the location of the petals (*picture e*)
- 2.) their direction
- 3.) the number stamped on them (*picture f*)

These parameters were translated into two different kinds of buildings:

) The numbers, which were stamped on the petals were translated into lengths of lines, the direction of the petal into the orientation of these lines. As these lengths were overlapping, they could be folded out into space as a three-dimensional model (*picture g*).

) The location and number of the petals was translated into sizes and locations of windows, and turned up to be the holes in the south façade of a 150x 9 meters long building. The sunlight would then draw its spot through the window to where the petal originally had been (*picture h*).

The major decisions of size were defined by the integration of a respected program: A Visitors Centre, containing exhibition spaces, computer rooms, a restaurant, a veterinary operating theatre and other public facilities. The building therefore contains doors for flamingoes only (they look like windows), and a wider door for the regional bulls and horses.

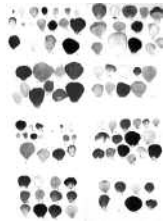
THE TABLEAU MOTIF

An oil painting describes the development of the building through the eyes of the local religious tradition of the Tableau Votif. Hundreds of these paintings are displayed in churches of the Camargue (*picture i*).

Whenever a miracle had happened, a popular painter would depict the event to thank the Virgin Mary for her help. In these paintings, Mary and her gipsy servant Sara are always seen in a boat, floating in the clouds. According to the local tradition, Mary and Sara arrived in the Camargue on a boat after Jesus' death. Still today, hundreds of gypsies celebrate their advent annually by carrying statues of the saints into the sea. The crypt of the church of the village Les Saintes Maries de la Mer is entirely devoted to Sara. On the altar lies a golden rose for her.

(*picture j*) The painting shows how the petals are blown by the storm and turned into holes of windows, through which the sun casts its light. The locals sit on the terraces of the building to thank the virgin for this miraculous transformation. The depiction of all actors in the painting was literally copied from existing paintings in the church of Les Saintes Maries de la Mer, and so was the distorted use of perspective. We also see the flamingoes and horse using their respective doors.

This project was developed in Francesca Hugues' unit at the Bartlett School of Architecture in 1996. It owes a lot to her agenda and inspiring tuition. She remains the best teacher we ever had.



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To Le Petit Chou

PRELUDE

The Rhone-delta region (Camargue) in the south of France is a repository of symbols, materials and traditions that form the origin of an architecture. Its ground condition is mainly sand and dunes; it is the habitat of a large number of bird species and has an ancient mystical tradition based on the advent of Mary.

THE DEFINITION OF A TERRITORY

The first task of the project was to develop a device with which to define a territory. A small rosewood box was constructed and taken from London to a beach in the Camargue (*picture a*). It contained 2080 rose petals which had been collected in the Rose Garden in London's Regent's Park. 20 petals of each of the different rose species displayed in the garden were collected in the rosewood box.

(*picture b*) The species had names such as *Sexy Rexy*, *Teardrop* or *Savoy Hotel* and were numbered. Their respective species number was stamped on the petals. The day when they were supposed to be scattered to define a territory was extremely windy (*picture c*).

A local storm called Mistral let the sea cover the beach with water and blew the petals as far as to the next shoreline (*picture d*).

The next sunny day, they were found a mile away, depicting a 300 metre long strip of where the sealevel had been the day before. The precise location, direction and number of the found petals were mapped to scale.

CRITIQUE OF TAXONOMY

582.734.4 is the number of the word ROSE in the book 'Universal Decimal Classification'. In this classification system the term 'The Universe of Information' is divided into groups