

# Frameworks

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Architecture necessarily becomes part of the physical or topographical world. Like landscapes and urban structure, buildings become the sites for culture. We are interested in the complex relationship between the surface/material definition of form and the consequent character and use of space. We believe that architecture is fundamentally stable, making places whose character is informed by material, size and location. Architecture can help us to understand our position in the world and can try to ennoble building.

### 1 Against a priori compositions

We are interested in simple or dumb forms that are able to accommodate and articulate a situation through their fabrication. These forms do not come from predetermined compositional programmes but rather embody an internal, or organic, structure that can operate within the artefact and onto its context.

### 2 Against a rhetorical use of technology

We are interested in the seamless web that can engage material and shape in the formation of spatial character. This requires that the spatial capacity of a material be emphasised over the display or objectification of its technology. The visual, tactile and acoustic qualities of the enveloping surface can become as important as its volumetric articulations.

### 3 Against invention

It is doubtful whether completely new forms can exist. The imperative assigned to the radically new -that such forms have no connection to the past and are the harbinger of an enhanced future- is tautological and fundamentally conservative. A more radical formal strategy is one that considers and re-presents the existing and the known. In this way artistic production can critically engage with an existing situation and contribute to an ongoing and progressive cultural discourse, allowing for alternative meanings.

Lee Friedlander and the new documentary photographers rejected the carefully contrived conventions of art photography and opened their work up to the possibilities offered by photojournalism. Whereas photographers like Edward Weston painstakingly assembled his pictures- often in the studio- by working in situations which cannot be controlled, Friedlander's primary concern is to find some coherence within the impossibly dense scenes in front of his lens. By engaging with the concrete facts of real life Friedlander's photographs are inclusive and complex. They are his way of searching out meaning, and they are sufficiently generous to allow for alternative meanings.

### 4 Against invisible architecture

The physical artefact can be a powerful holder of meaning. Although it is no longer possible, or desirable, for architecture to convey a narrow iconographic programme, there exists a threshold of density or presence which buildings must embody if they are to have the capacity to hold meaning. Buildings should not preach, they are important for their ability to hold a multiplicity of projected emotions.