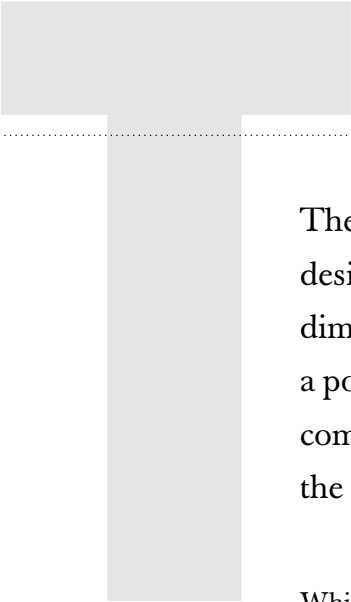


Schematic Design: Communicating the Design Spirit

ORLANDO DIAZ-AZCUY



The schematics are the most inspirational and creative phase of the design process. Schematic design is when you communicate the three-dimensional and decorative ideas about the space to the client. To reach a point where you actually have ideas to communicate, you need to have completed the programming and the planning phases based not only on the quantitative information, but the philosophical as well.

While the entire design process is a collaborative one, schematic design should be the responsibility of a single mind. This phase of the process is the most creative expression of the project: schematics illustrate the spirit of what the space will become, therefore it should express the designer's insights and intuition. In the case of a collaborative or group effort there must be a designer who can synthesize the various points of view. While all the individuals are creators of their own ideas, the master coordinator must synthesize the different ideas. It is not easy to be the single creator of an architectural expression, and it is even more difficult to be the orchestrator of differing opinions.

Programming also includes finding out what the social behavior of the company is and what image the company wants to project to the public. In residential projects, it includes how the clients live now and how the new environment will change them in the future.

The information gathered during the programming phase should also accurately capture the identity of the client. The planning phase of the project should begin to express the potential architectural character. Sometimes, however, the reality of design practice gets in the way, and the individuals who gather and plan the space are not necessarily the persons who develop the schematic design. The designer should be assessing, or participating in the assessment of, the purpose of the project through the programming and planning phases.

Schematics are for expressing to your client what the solutions will look like in a general sense. You need to be able to express your ideas both verbally