

# Graphitecture

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## The Graphic Designer is a 21st Century Architect

**There has always been a fundamental relationship** between graphic design and architecture. While architecture maintains as the art and science of creating and designing spaces, traditionally graphic design participates in these spaces by way of importation onto them and not as a consideration of them. Thus, the current relationship between graphic design and architecture is broken into a series of interfaces, a fragmented set of beats. Our social spaces are experiencing a rapid multiplication of surfaces paralleled with a mass acceleration of movement. Graphic design has always been in the business of working within the parameters of these surfaces and in fact as a principal facilitator of their determined amplification. Now it must become part engineer of their management. In order to address this momentum, graphic design must take on a more aggressive role in the planning and authoring of space. It ought to participate in the manifested form, the physical DNA of future spaces alongside science and architecture. Graphic design must synthesize more completely with architecture as a method for addressing the contemporary multiplication of surfaces and acceleration of movements in social spaces.

**The model for this synthesis** is already inherent in other kinds of evolutionary developments toward the future. The human body, in order to deal with new schizophrenic environments is undergoing transformations, meshing with forms of technology, encouraging it toward a posthuman future at various complexities and depths. Through the logics of hybridity, symbiosis, and finally an imagined synthesis, the human race is moving from a state of being human, to transhuman, and finally posthuman. Similarly, in order for graphic design to address those same environmental schizophrenias, it too must move beyond the states of hybridity and symbiosis to embrace synthesis with architecture so that it may graduate from graphic design, to graphically enhanced architecture, to a kind of "post design", or rather Graphitecture.

**A hybrid is a partnership** between two independent participants. The forms work together but remain unchanged in their individual states. In its hybrid state, graphic design is a cosmetic applied to the face of architecture or other physical surfaces. Within today's context, humans are inherently hybrid creatures. We partner with an array of technologies available to us in order to accomplish a particular result, for example people and their automobiles; this partnership, however, does not formally reshape either the person or the car they are driving.

**Symbiosis is a mutation** that occurs as the result of a partnership. The forms are now integrated further, in an interlocked state, and can no longer operate independently from one another though their origins are still determinable. In its symbiotic state with architecture, graphic design is the formal equivalent of what is termed "transhuman", an intermediary state between human and posthuman. For example, an amputee has a symbiotic relationship between his/her body and any number of prosthetic devices. The person may not be able to walk without the false leg, and the leg is virtually useless unless it is attached to the body of someone who needs to walk. Any snapshot of Times Square reveals a kind of symbiotic relationship that graphic design has with architecture, where graphic design operates as architecture's prosthetic device, interlocked with one another performing a function that the other cannot produce alone.

**What elludes us less and less is synthesis**, a total union between independent forms, the complete fusion resulting in an entirely new form, where origins are assumed no longer recognizable, or rather a pure anthropogeny is no longer codifiable. A posthuman is a hypothetical future being whose capabilities so radically exceed those of present humans as to no longer be human by current standards, 'it' has achieved a complete consolidation between its original human organization and its technological influencer. Although there are no public accounts of living posthumans, all of the arts have imagined exponential ways and forms who they are and what they look like. Comparatively, for graphic design to transcend into 'post design', it must imagine how it can synthesize completely with architecture so that the new forms' capabilities so radically exceed those of present graphic design and architecture as to no longer be either of which by current standards.

**Just as technology is a kind of software** applied to the human body to enhance its form and function, graphic design is a software that is applied to architectural bodies for the same purposes. As a vehicle for many things, graphic design preoccupies itself with the business of conversations. Its a medium in the habit of the illustration of ideas, making social commentaries here, defining styles there. Graphitecture will offer a kind of graphic design practice that participates in the construct of the social spaces it earlier only illustrated, commented or lived on. Elevating graphic design to an architectural role will yield new understandings of space and time, while aligning it with the evolution of the human condition will amplify new speculations and potentials of human transformation.

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**Thesis Abstract**  
January 2007