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## Arrival to the City

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## Arrival to the City

### Authors

Scott Arford, Neil Cristal, Michael Dean, Christopher Mitchell, and Doug Shaffer

## Arrival to the City

Scott Arford  
Neil Cristal  
Michael Deane  
Christopher Mitchell  
Doug Shaffer

### Introduction:

*"Human life, like a poetical figure, is an indeterminate middle between overspecified poles always threatening to collapse it. The poles may be birth and death, father and mother, mother and wife, love and judgment, heaven and earth, first thing and the last thing. Art narrates the middle region and charts it like a purgatory, for only if it exists can life exist; only if the imagination presses against the poles are error and life and illusion... possible."*

Geoffrey Hartman

The projects to follow are shamanic acts, trying to heal the "eternal wound of existence," of life and architecture. The healing occurs through acts and events which constitute the discourse of arrival to an ideal city. The transition between the poles makes architecture performative, involved with happening and doing, leading to personal realization and knowledge.

### Leap of Faith

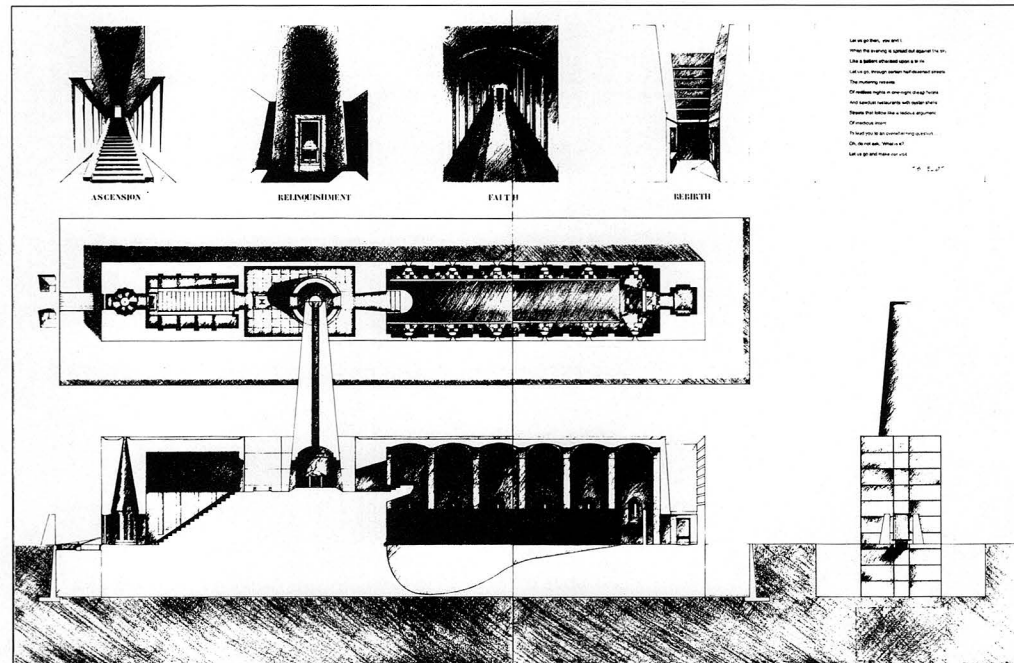
Scott Arford

*Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against  
the sky  
Like a patient etherized upon a table,  
Let us go, through certain half-deserted  
streets,  
The muttering retreats  
Of restless nights in one-night cheap  
hotels  
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-  
shells;  
Streets that follow like a tedious argument*

*Of insidious intent  
To lead you to an overwhelming ques-  
tion...  
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"  
Let us go and make our visit.*

—T. S. Eliot

The ideal city is not one of this Earth, its inhabitants no longer need this world. The ideal city is that of the dead. Arrival to this city, for the living, can occur only as a transcendental, enlightening experience. An experience that, because we live to remember it, will enhance our worldly lives. My proposal, a kind of temple and death ritual, provide the opportunity for this experience. First the initiate ascends the stairway,



Leap of Faith

leaving behind the world of the familiar, to the sacrificial area. No longer in need of material items, clothes and other worldly possessions may be relinquished to the fire. After completing this act, the initiate must test his faith. Before him lies a void, knowing that it is the only way to the ideal city, he must trust his beliefs and leap into it. The initiate, now cleansed, emerges safely from the void. He is rewarded with brilliant light. A towel and robe signal the end of his journey.

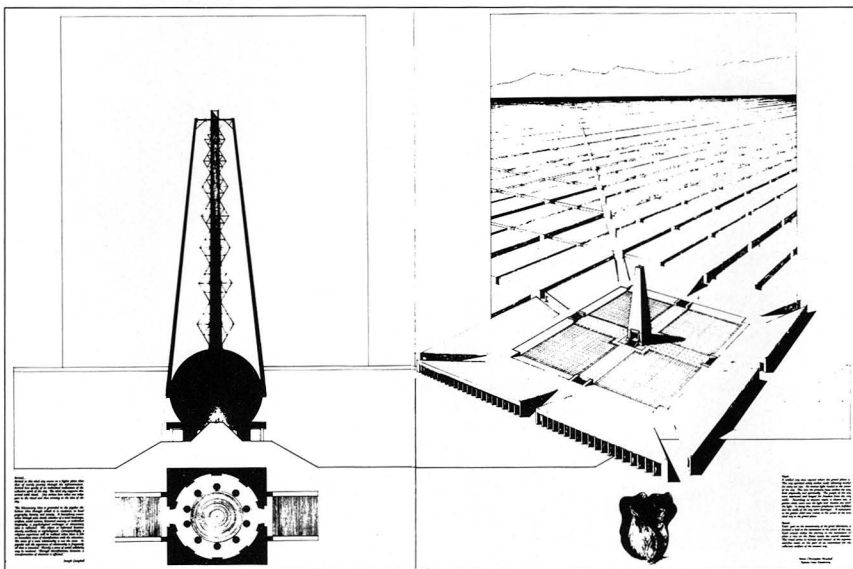
### Ritual of the Roses

Christopher Mitchell

Arrival...

Arrival to this ideal city occurs on a higher plane than that of merely passing through the infrastructure. Arrival here speaks of an individual realization of the collective spirit of the city. The ideal city supports this arrival with the ritual. One arrives here when one takes part in the ritual and thus arrives at the idea of the city.

*"The elementary idea is grounded in the psyche; the Ethnic idea through which it is rendered, in local geography, history, and society. A hierophany*



### Ritual of the Roses

*occurs when through some detail, whether of a local landscape, artifact, social custom, historical memory, or individual biography, a psychological archetype or elementary idea is reflected. The object so informed becomes thereby sacralized, or mythologized. Correspondingly, a religious experience will be realized when there is felt an immediate sense of identification with the revelation. The sense of a mere relationship is not the same. In popular cult the experience of relationship is frequently all that is intended. Thereby a sense of social solidarity may be rendered. Through identification, however, a transformation of character is effected."*

Joseph Campbell

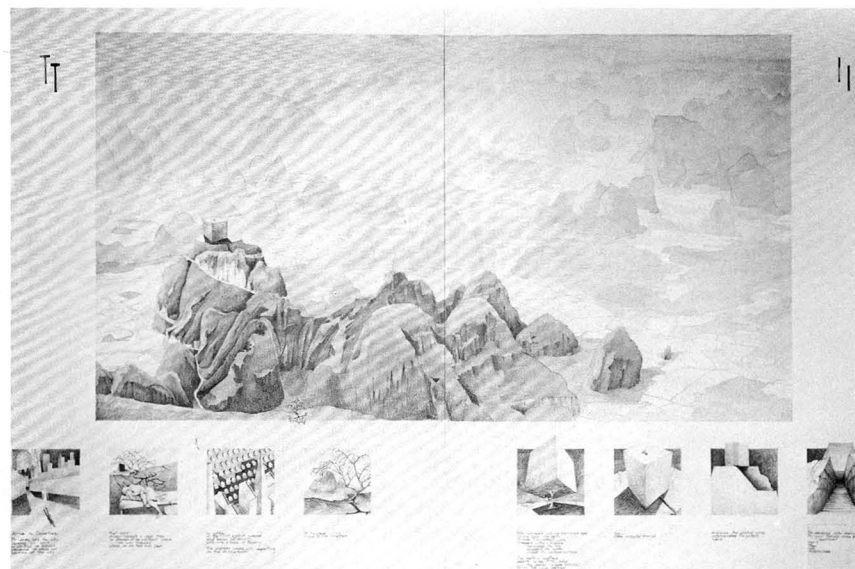
Myth...

52 A walled city once existed where the

grand plaza is today. This city operated solely within itself, allowing neither for entry nor exit. An intense light resided within the center of the city. Naturally this was the primary focus of all within the walls. According to ancient myths, a chosen one. A golden child, went into the light and became one with the light. In doing this, ancient prophecies were fulfilled and the walls of the ancient city were destroyed. A monument to the golden child now stands in the center of the new (Ideal) city in the Grand Plaza.

Ritual...

Each year on the anniversary of the great liberation, a festival is held at the monument in the center of the city. Each citizen makes the journey to the monument to place a rose on the flame within the sacred chamber. This ritual ultimately serves to recreate and re-



### Mr. Jones Left the City

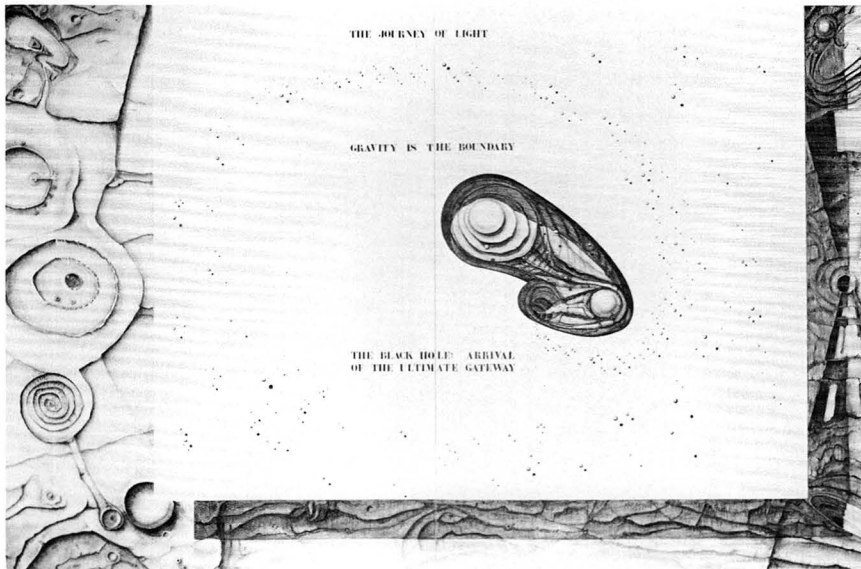
mind us of the supreme sacrifice made on the part of an individual for the collective welfare of the city.

#### Mr. Jones Left the City

Doug Shaffer

Arrival is Departure  
Mr. Jones left the city  
because his spirit  
could find no ground,  
because he could not  
become of the city  
he left.  
that night  
asleep beneath a magic tree  
he dreamed of a perfect place  
where no person had ever been.  
(he was moved)  
he awoke

at the first light of sunrise  
and began his mission  
with only a hope of finding  
the journey begins with departing  
on the obvious path  
to the place: vision  
locked in the mountain  
With anxious precision he hammered  
vigorously  
carving away the earth  
to free the perfect cube  
trapped within: trapped  
hammered the top  
pounded the sides  
chisled the perfect bottom  
the perfect surface  
leading to the final blow  
(he paused: a deep breath)  
falling, the cube captures  
Mr. Jones, crushing  
him



### *Journey of Light*

made immortal, traced  
displacing the central core  
outlined atop the perfect  
space

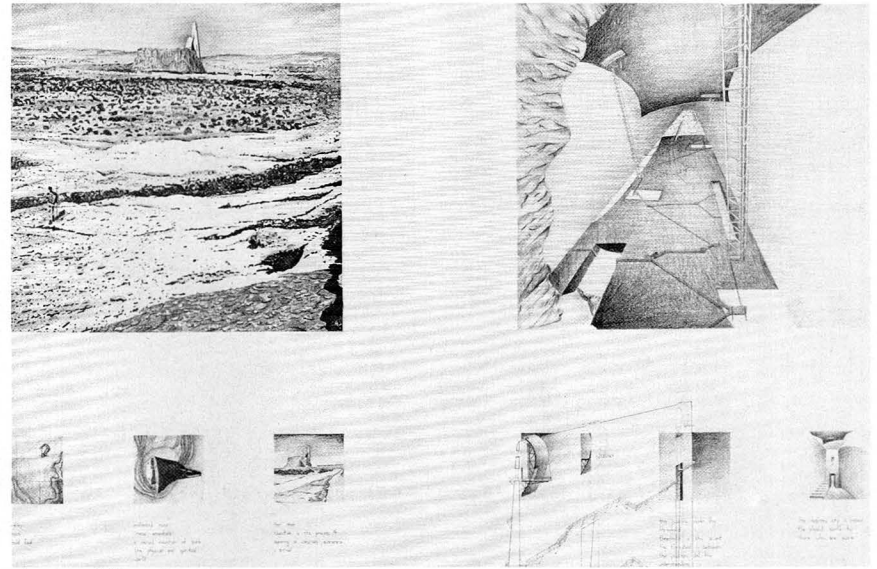
He delivered unto man a vision  
He gave through stone and sacrifice  
Spirit  
Hope  
City  
Architecture

### **Journey of Light**

Neil Cristal

The creation of Light embodies the beginning of human existence, just as, the culmination of light signals the end of human life. Light forms the gateway of birth and completes the journey towards

man's destiny, death. The sacred myths in the journey—death and religion, shelter and city, language and technology—become mere rituals and artifacts of time, monuments of past myths and boundaries. The beginning and end of light form the gateway of an infinite density, the black hole. Light's journey circumscribes time: the past light of the sun becomes our present light, yet expands unknowingly into the future. Gravity becomes light's boundary and thus the universal destiny of light, its beginning and end. The 'light' of science, the final key to existence, replaces myths and superstitions. The arrival at the final gateway of death unlocks the hidden sacred reality of human order. This gateway of time and space culminates in the ideal city, dimension, force, or God.



### *Ascent of Consciousness*

### **Ascent of Consciousness**

Michael Deane

The notion of arrival is not one of a physical passage but rather one of conscious awareness. This can be realized only after a continuous effort. A threshold is a device that helps those that are not aware, to become aware. A very successful way of helping the unaware is providing them with a ritual that enlightens them, thus, causing a conscious understanding. Modern man does not have a common set of beliefs or a dogma that is uncontested. True understanding can only come through a personal decision. The only way man can separate himself from outside influences is through a transcendental experience. The idealized city can only be one mans understanding of what that place is.

Acoma valley  
New Mexico  
a threshold found  
enchanted mesa  
(mesa encantada)  
a sacred mountain of both  
the physical and spiritual world

for man  
cognition is the process of  
acquiring a conscious awareness: arrival

the journey seeks the threshold  
the threshold is the ascent  
the threshold is between the journey  
and the understanding  
the idealized city is beyond the  
physical world for those who are aware.