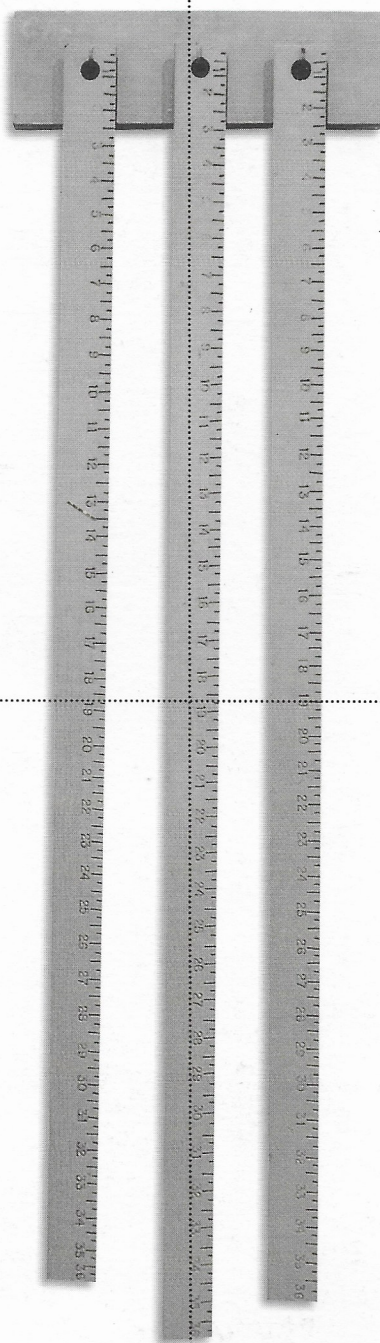


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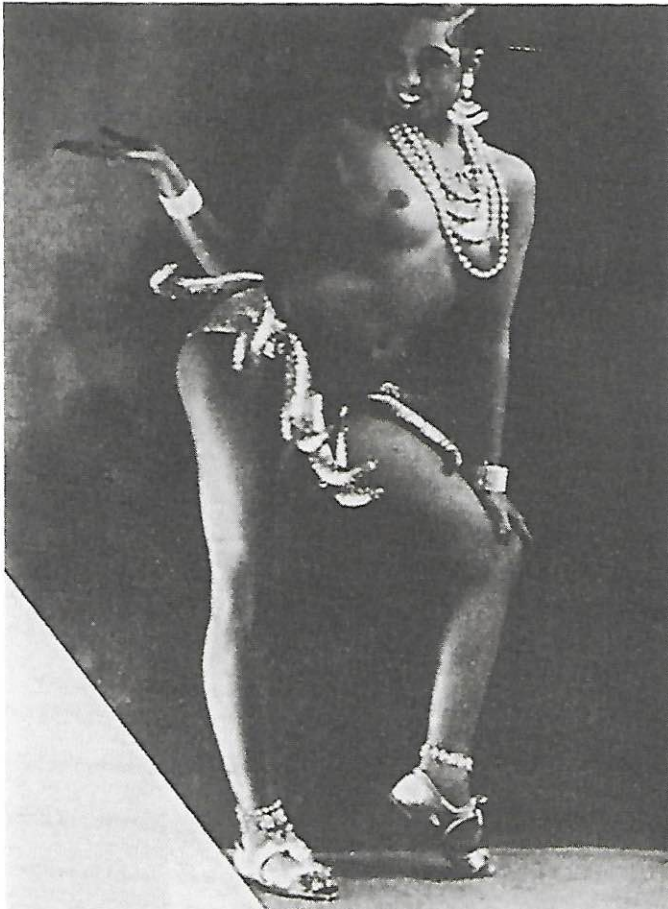
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The banana skirt, first worn in the Folies-Bergère,  
1926-27.  
*(Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)*



*Charles Louis*

## Baker's Loos and Loos's Loss: Architecting the Body<sup>1</sup>

The water flooded with light, the refreshing swim, the voyeuristic pleasure of underwater exploration — these are the carefully balanced ingredients of this gay architecture. But what matters more is that the invitation to the spectacular suggested by the theme of a house for a cabaret star is handled by Loos with discretion and intellectual detachment, more as a poetic game, involving the mnemonic pursuit of quotations and allusions to the Roman spirit, than as a vulgar surrender to the taste of Hollywood.

/

— BENEDETTO GRAVAGNUOLO<sup>2</sup>

### Baker and Loos

In 1928 Adolf Loos designed a house in Paris—never built—for Josephine Baker. She was twenty-two. She had moved to New York from St. Louis in 1921 at the age of fifteen, and to Paris from New York in 1925, escaping a difficult life of poverty. A singer and dancer in all black musical reviews such as “Shuffle Along” in Harlem, she became a star of the *Revue Negre* in Paris, and a *cause celebre*.

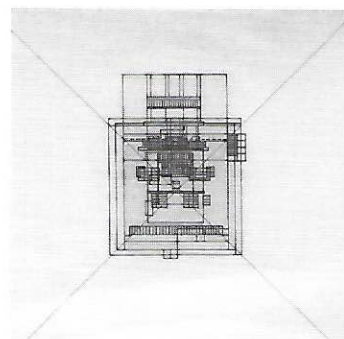
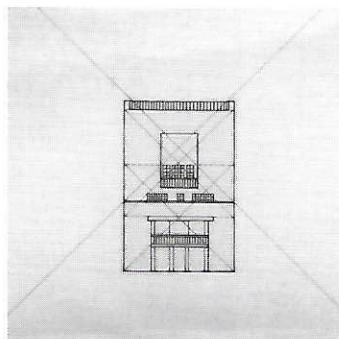
The *Revue Negre* mirrored cosmopolitan Parisians' expectations of the primitive, expectations that had been building for more than a decade. It was here, in Paris, at the Musee d'Ethnographique, that Picasso had found inspiration for *Les Femmes d'Alger*, looking at African masks. And it was here, in Paris, that Josephine Baker caught the imagination of the culture with her exotic movements, sensual costumes, and tremendous energy. She quickly became a celebrity. Alexander Calder fashioned a sculpture in her likeness; she was rumored to have had an affair with Le Corbusier.

Despite her overt eroticism, Josephine Baker simultaneously maintained another stage persona. One of her biographers, Phyllis Rose, describes it thus:

From the later twenties date the striking photographs of her in glamorous designer dresses crossing her eyes, and at this stage of her life, the eye-crossing seems . . . to function like a magical gesture of self-defense in a specifically erotic arena. It wards off the relentlessly erotic gaze of whoever might have been looking at her, as mythically one warded off vampires by making the sign of the cross. Afraid in some way of evoking undiluted sexual excitement, she thwarts the deeply provocative contact of eye with eye not just by averting her own eyes but by jamming them grotesquely up against one another.<sup>3</sup>

Opposite page left: Josephine Baker at the age when she met Adolf Loos.

Opposite page right: Adolf Loos at the age when he met Josephine Baker.



78 Three years after arriving in Paris, Josephine Baker, exotic dancer, black face clown, allowed Adolf Loos to design her house.<sup>4</sup>

Adolf Loos, a Viennese, had been living in Paris since 1922. In 1928 he was 58 years old, twice married, twice divorced. He had known Josephine Baker for two years. He was a well-known architect, having completed significant buildings around Europe, including the 1925 residence for the dadaist poet Tristan Tzara in Paris. His architecture followed principles laid out in his essays, notably "Architecture" and "Ornament and Crime."

Loos had begun his seminal essay of 1908, "Ornament and Crime," by proclaiming:

The human embryo goes through all the phases of animal life while still inside the womb. When man is born, his instincts are those of a newborn dog. His childhood runs through all the changes corresponding to the history of mankind. At the age of two he looks like a Papuan, at four like one of an ancient Germanic tribe, at six like Socrates, at eight like Voltaire. . . . The child is amoral. So is the Papuan, to us. The Papuan kills his enemies and eats them. He is no criminal. But if a modern man kills someone and eats him, he is a criminal or a degenerate.<sup>5</sup>

Along with built and unbuilt architectural projects spanning nearly thirty years, Adolf Loos articulated a philosophy in which the primitive, the vernacular, the female (a cumulative Other) are contrasted with the modern, the civilized, the male (the Self with which Loos and the educated men of his generation quite reasonably identified). He frequently located this opposition within the human body, as when he said (in the same essay) "The Papuan tattoos his skin, his boat, his rudder, his oars; in short, everything he can get his hands on. He is no criminal. The modern man who tattoos himself is a criminal or a degenerate."<sup>6</sup>

Because Loos often used the analogy of clothing to architecture, we might assume he gave the human body—both his own and others—a good deal of thought. Loos extrapolated from the writings of Vitruvius and, especially, Alberti as he compared clothing and dressing to buildings. This use of anthropomorphic projection, which assumes that a building is a body to be clothed, is especially pertinent in the context of the Josephine Baker project. The architect and client are opposite both in gender and race, which makes empathetic identification difficult: they do not "look like" each other.

This polarity is immediately and tangibly apparent in their contrasting physical bodies. No theory is necessary. Josephine Baker and Adolf Loos were embodied difference.

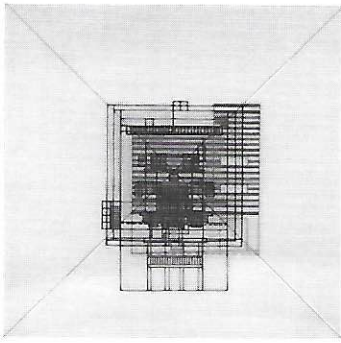
Whose body, then, would be projected into the architecture? In what form? Toward what end?

### A Couple of Couples

Before proceeding with the tale of Baker's Loos, I will briefly summarize some of the arguments that shaped cultural production in the early Twentieth Century and that continue to do so today. Using the term 'couple' architecturally to mean equal and opposite forces which act against each other to create rotation, I will describe two sets of couples: the Self/Other couple and the Modern/Primitive couple. This coupling of couples is not accidental, for we generally identify the Self as Modern, the Other as Primitive. Positioned at the pivot, I will locate the story of dancer Josephine Baker's house by architect Adolf Loos.<sup>7</sup>

The first couple is the Self/Other. Theorist Jacques Lacan characterizes the acute awareness of that which is outside one's self as a simultaneous fear of, and longing for, the Other. It is worth tracing the lineage of the now-classic mirror experiment Lacan cites to substantiate the Self/Other split. Lacan demonstrates that children before a certain age are unable to distinguish themselves from their visually understood environment when looking in a mirror. What is seen is described as a morseled body, a fragmented self, inextricably woven into the environmental context. This same period of a child's development, generally before the age of three, is a time, in Freud's language, of "polymorphous perversity." It corresponds to the evolution he identified from orality into genitality. This correspondence is not accidental, because Lacan followed Freud, and Freud followed Charles Darwin.<sup>8</sup> In 1877 Darwin watched his own son identify his image in a mirror, beginning at about the age of nine months.<sup>9</sup>

The second couple, that which opposes the Modern to the Primitive, can be quickly collapsed back to the genealogy of the present study by simply recalling that it was also Charles Darwin who established the paradigm of evolution, thereby locating the modern concept of progress (and its converse, the primitive) within biology.<sup>10</sup> Freud brought this idea of evolutionary progress to bear on the problem of the psyche and the condition of culture in writings such as *Totem and Taboo* and *A Civilization and Its Discontents*. This allowed Freud and sub-



Opposite page left: Tristan Tzara House elevation, showing squares as ordering device.

Opposite page right: Elevations of all houses discussed, except the Josephine Baker House, merged. Square geometry is employed for registration purposes.

This page: Elevations of all houses discussed including Josephine Baker's, merged.

sequent anthropologists to categorize whole cultures as primitive in relation to modern Western civilization.

Baker and Loos had overlapping obsessions with the Primitive/Modern couple as it defined discourse about race. There is some reason to believe that Josephine Baker was a product of a bi-racial union.<sup>11</sup> In any case, the issue of "mixed" blood is a recurring theme in her vast creative output, which included books, films, and theatrical shows.<sup>12</sup> She was also understandably disturbed by institutionalized segregation in the United States and attempted to rectify it throughout her career. Loos, though not explicitly interested in racial issues, wrote passionately about relative qualities attributable to people of different ethnic identities. As suggested in the earlier quotation, his cultural hierarchy placed Papuans at the bottom of the evolutionary chain, and the English at the top.

Both the Self/Other couple and the Modern/Primitive couple, in which each term is defined by the negation of its opposite, operate through paradox. In Freudian terms, the fundamental and defining paradox of life is death. Absolutely predictable yet absolutely unknowable, death defines the life of the human body by ending it. Freud describes this opposition as *Eros*, referring to life, love, and sexuality, and *Thanatos*, referring to death and the extinction of Self. For Freud these imperatives arise in equal and opposite measure. One cannot know *Eros* without the equally present shadow of *Thanatos*. Therefore, the modern self, in denying death, must also reject sexuality, love, life. In this, Adolf Loos and Josephine Baker stood, or moved, together.

Indeed, through dance they evidenced a mutual interest in the erotic body, defined as vibrantly alive and, sometimes, as sexual. For while Baker's commitment to dance and movement is obvious, Loos too had had a lifelong fascination with many varieties of contemporary dance. He began a correspondence with pioneering modern dancer Isadora Duncan in 1904, and saw her perform in Paris twenty years later.<sup>13</sup> It is rumored that Josephine Baker taught him to charleston, and he bragged about his proficiency. Loos' second wife, Elsie, was a professional dancer, who left him to establish her career in New York in 1926 (perhaps not coincidentally, the year Loos met Baker). At any rate, possibly because of these varied and long-standing connections to dance, Loos paid considerable attention to the kinesthetic experience of architectural space, and he developed two interdependent

strategies to engage the mobile, tactile body.

79

In his residential projects Loos evolved the concept of the "plan of volumes," in which a series of public rooms such as the living, dining, music rooms, and library are connected along a precisely arranged path. The path is essentially a stairway, with ascents, descents, turns, pauses, views framed or concealed. It is all carefully choreographed. No single plan, section, or photograph conveys the effect of this time-space phenomenon. Rather, each sequence is designed to be experienced kinesthetically.

Here the second strategy comes into play, for visual orientation goes into free fall when it is replaced by a muscular understanding of space and path. A description of his Muller house of 1930 reads more like a dance lesson than an architectural analysis: "The many different levels make it necessary for anyone who wants to get from the dining room to the study, for example, to go down two steps to a landing, climb another eight from there, descend a further four steps again in the room itself."<sup>14</sup> Appreciation of such an architecture requires relatively little of the eyes, relying more on the skeletal and muscular systems, on a sense of balance, and on the ability to walk a complex and varied rhythm. Correlatively, photographs, which rely solely on the visual, are of limited use in explaining this architecture. Loos himself proudly stated that:

A real building makes no impression as an illustration reproduced two-dimensionally. It is my greatest pride that the interiors which I have created are totally ineffective in photographs. I am proud of the fact that the inhabitants of my spaces do not recognize their own apartments in the photographs . . .<sup>15</sup>

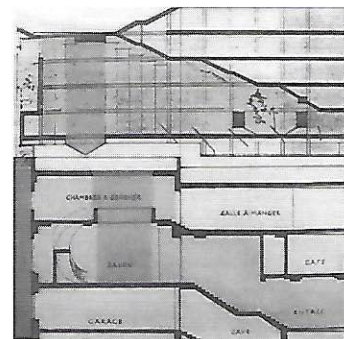
Loos, then, was an architect with an avowed disdain of visual representation, who developed a sophisticated method of providing a kinetic experience of space.

However, Loos's house for Baker—presumably the most kinesthetically sensitive of clients—is a disturbing rupture within his domestic oeuvre. For here the typical upward spiral of sequentially revealed volumes is completely absent, along with virtually all other domestic themes. Instead, Loos, who worked with extreme sophistication and sensitivity for clients with whom he identified, saw in Josephine Baker a client profoundly foreign, profoundly Other. In fact, she was doubly other: both female and black, the primitive primitive.<sup>16</sup>

This page: Josephine Baker House, stair, section, and Tientsin Exhibition Hall stair section aligned to compare spatial figures at same size. Tientsin Exhibition hall section is drawn upside down (unfolded at line of symmetry between two sections) to highlight similarities.

Opposite page left: Tientsin Exhibition Hall floor plan emphasizing shared programs.

Opposite page right: Tientsin Exhibition Hall floor plan (with middle third removed) and Josephine Baker floor plan(s) at same size, demonstrate shared programs. When plans are unfolded at line of symmetry between projects, symmetry of programs is evident.



80 Of the Baker house, Ludwig Munz remarks “There is no doubt that the most charming effects could have been achieved in this house, thanks to its design on a ‘plan of volumes.’”<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Frampton dismisses it as “ostentatious.”<sup>18</sup> Gravagnuolo describes “the revival of dichromatism: this is an *expressive technique* (emphasis Gravagnuolo’s) typical of medieval Tuscan language (one thinks of the exterior of the cathedral of San Giovanni in Pistoia or the interior of the cathedral of Siena).”<sup>19</sup> But neither formal comparisons nor cursory dismissals do justice to the peculiar characteristics of the Josephine Baker project. Unfortunately, apologetic and uncritical formalism tends to flatten and thus avoid the problem of difference.<sup>20</sup>

The remainder of this essay will attempt to reveal the sharp political contours not of Loos’ Baker House, but of Baker’s Loos house.<sup>21</sup> To do so I will look to the evidence Loos provides. Four floor plans, two building sections, and a model constitute the primary documentation of the project.

#### When A House Is Not A Home

“The greatest glory in the art of building is to have a good sense of what is appropriate.”

– LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI, *ON THE ART OF BUILDING*

For Loos, the house, as a type, had to please everyone, whereas a work of art did not:

The work of art is a private matter for the artist. The house is not. The work of art is brought into the world without there being a need for it. The house satisfies a requirement. The work of art is responsible to none; the house is responsible to everyone. The work of art wants to draw people out of their state of comfort. The house has to serve comfort. The work of art is revolutionary; the house is conservative.<sup>22</sup>

Comparing the Josephine Baker House designed in 1928 to the Rufer House of 1922, the Tristan Tzara House of 1925, the Moller House of 1927, and the Muller House of 1930, certain differences are immediately apparent.

One obvious difference is the way in which the square is used to compose elevations. Referring to Loos’s repeated use of the square in elevation studies for the Tristan Tzara House, Gravagnuolo states:

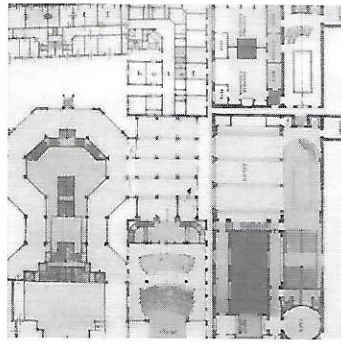
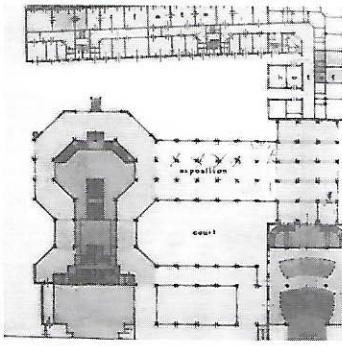
The square is a pure geometric figure that by its simplicity of design gives rise to the above mentioned (elevational) effect of estrangement. It is no coincidence that in *Rythmus 21* (1921) the Dadaist Hans Richter had repeated squares in an obsessive film sequence, producing one of the most advanced experiments with visual language. This alienating intention is more clearly visible in the sheet of sketches (dated 1 August 1925) than in the building itself . . .<sup>23</sup>

Despite Gravagnuolo’s assertion of estrangement, in the Tristan Tzara house relative visual calm prevails. Indeed, with the exception of the Josephine Baker House, all of Loos’ primary elevations are ordered by a series of nested squares strung along a line of bilateral symmetry, rendering the elevations compositionally stable. While regulating squares in each of the other projects cohere to form tidy wholes, the traces of squares in the Josephine Baker House are literally disjunctive. Formally dynamic and asymmetrical, the entry facade does indeed provoke suggestions of an “alienating” intention, for it is composed of a series of distinct, jostled squares set on a base, in contrast to the regularized and stable squared elevations presented in every other case.

I firmly believe that any person of sense would not want to design his private house very differently from those of others, and would be careful not to incite envy through extravagance or ostentation.<sup>24</sup>

Following Alberti, Loos says “The house should be discreet on the outside; its entire richness should be disclosed on the inside,”<sup>25</sup> yet he apparently violates this rule both in the massing and surfacing of the Josephine Baker House. Unlike the other urban houses, the exterior elevation of the Josephine Baker House is striped. This bold elevation substantially deviates from those of its neighbors in Paris—it could hardly be characterized as discrete. Beatriz Colomina hints at the possibility of an inverted interior when she describes Loos’s theme of external appropriateness in domestic and public buildings:

The interior speaks the language of culture, the language of the experience of things; the exterior speaks the language of civilization, that of information. The interior is the other of the exterior, in the same way as information is the other of experience. Thus,



on the other hand, public buildings can speak calmly of what is going on behind their walls.<sup>26</sup>

Looking inside the five houses, other differences appear. As discussed, Loos's residential plans usually provide a carefully choreographed, sequential experience of space. Rooms reveal themselves slowly as one proceeds up short flights of stairs, around corners. Almost without exception, the entry sequence is interrupted by a closet immediately across from the front door, and the entry to the living room is off center, requiring a twisting diagonal movement to achieve alignment with the axis of the room itself.<sup>27</sup> Interlocking three-dimensionally, these public rooms in the Rufer, Tristan Tzara, Moller, and Muller Houses thwart easy visual understanding. The sequence of public spaces in the Josephine Baker House, however, is the quintessential "straight shot": A large, broad stair case rises directly from the entry to the major public space, with none of the sense of mystery and anticipation evident in Loos's other houses. The *parti* is dead simple, immediately apparent in plan and section. None of Loos's other houses so easily reveals its spatial structure.

There is a related lack of Loos's characteristic secondary, interstitial spaces within the walls of the Josephine Baker House. Most of the other houses contain offset interior windows and overlooks that traverse the spatial sequence, sometimes collapsing it and other times attenuating it. In the Josephine Baker House, interior windows occur quite differently. They line up across the plan, making the opaque transparent, turning the inside out. Oblique views are rejected in favor of direct, geometric relationships that disallow veiled anticipation in favor of clinical clarity.

But perhaps the most provocative difference between this house and Loos' others is found within the bedroom suites of the houses. In the Rufer and Moller houses, several bedrooms open onto a hall and share a common bath. The largest of the bedrooms is the master bedroom, a situation not uncommon today. In the Muller House the master bedroom is symmetrically flanked by the husband and wife's separate dressing rooms. While they each have an equal private realm, the largest room in the suite, the actual bedroom, is shared.

In the Josephine Baker House, the shared realm is reduced to what appears to be a shared *bed*, which cuts through the wall. Two "master" bedrooms are identical, both with a private bath, a built-in desk and closet area, and

access to the private mezzanine. At the time Loos designed this house Josephine Baker was a single woman. She may have been at the beginning of what proved to be an enduring relationship with Pepito Abatino. However, the house unquestionably was to be built by and for her, and the lack of formal hierarchy accorded to what was presumably the master bedroom is most curious. Also curious is the honorific position given to the bed, on axis with the most dramatic element of this or any of Loos's houses: an indoor swimming pool. (Unfortunately the occupant of the bed might remain unaware of the pool's position, for there is no way to see or to gain access to the swimming pool directly from the bed or either bedroom.) The exact splitting of one bedroom into two diminishes its importance, and denies its viability as the location of the master of the house.

We can assume that Loos was aware of this result. Had he not said:

The artist, the architect, first senses the effect that he intends to realize and sees the rooms he wants to create in his mind's eye. He senses the effect that he wishes to exert upon the spectator: fear and horror if it is a dungeon, reverence if a church, respect for the power of the state if a government palace, piety if a tomb, homyness if a residence, gaiety if a tavern. These effects are produced by both the material and the form of the space?<sup>28</sup>

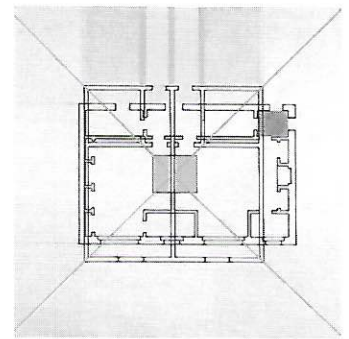
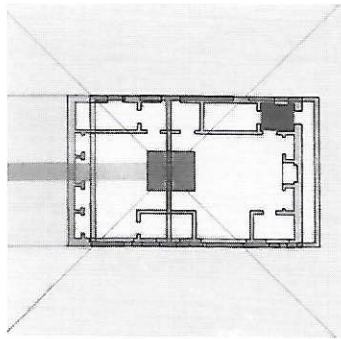
If Adolf Loos's intention was *not* to create a home morphologically or programmatically, what else might it have been?

Though comparisons to other residential projects prove disparate, the architectural components of the Josephine Baker House do bear a striking similarity to another contemporaneous project. The longitudinal section of the Josephine Baker House drawn by Loos cuts through the entry sequence revealing a grand, cascading, skylit stair, which leads first to a large salon, then, transformed, arcs finally upstairs to a mezzanine that serves as a vestibule for the two identical bedrooms. This section very nearly matches the vertical progression demonstrated in a similar drawing of the Tientsin Exhibition Hall, an unbuilt project designed for the northern Chinese city of Tientsin in 1925. Acting as a sort of fingerprint, minor idiosyncrasies are shared by both plans. The elevators in both projects are located at the end of the entry sequence, where a subtractive notch in the Josephine Baker plan becomes an additive "tab" in the Tientsin Exhibition



This page left: Tientsin Exhibition Hall linking hotel bedrooms folded over Josephine Baker bedroom(s). Drawn at the same size, square geometry is used for registration purposes.

This page right: Tientsin Exhibition Hall adjoining hotel bedrooms with private baths folded over Josephine Baker bedroom(s). Drawn at the same size, square geometry is used for registration purposes.



82 Hall. In the Chinese project, the stair is joined by two other major programmatic pieces, banks of hotel rooms and a theater, which collectively comprise the building complex.

Two types of hotel rooms are proposed. Taken together, they precisely form the bedrooms in the Josephine Baker House. One hotel bedroom type is entered through a foyer adjacent to a small room, presumably a bath (since no common bath spaces are evident in this wing). The second hotel bedroom type shows pairs of rooms capable of being joined through a door in the middle of their common wall, a function performed by the built-in bed in the Josephine Baker House. Overlays (using equal sized squares to begin the comparison) demonstrate this point.

The axis of the theater in the Tientsin Exhibition Hall runs parallel to that of the grand staircase, matching the swimming pool to stair relationship in the Josephine Baker House. Thus, comparing the Baker House to the Tientsin Exhibition Hall, the stair can be substituted for a monumental entry, the salon for the exposition hall, the *chambres a coucher* for the hotel bedrooms, and the swimming pool stands in for the theater itself. But although the specificity of this correspondence is surprising, the general intention is not. For Loos's assistant on the Josephine Baker project, Kurt Unger, later described it in precisely these terms:

The reception rooms on the first floor arranged round the pool—a large salon with an extensive top-lit vestibule, a small lounge and the circular cafe—indicate that this was intended not solely for private use but as a miniature entertainment centre. On the first floor, low passages surround the pool. They are lit by the wide windows visible on the outside, and from them, thick transparent windows are let into the side of the pool, so that it was possible to watch swimming and diving in its crystal-clear water, flooded with light from above: an underwater revue, so to speak.<sup>29</sup>

The programmatic elements of the Josephine Baker House are found among Loos's set of public codes, not his private ones. In the Tientsin project, the link works neatly from *parti* to *parti*: after taking a slice out of the middle, the four-square arrangement is imported wholesale into the Josephine Baker House. In fact, we can use Unger to corroborate the evidence of the drawings, to verify that programmatic elements that *look* like parts of a theater are

intended to *act* as parts of a theater, despite their location in what is ostensibly a house.

Extending this logic, what other programs might be encoded in the Josephine Baker House, and how might they act to structure Loos's proposal to house the primitive primitive, the doubly Other Josephine Baker? If aspects of the project also present in the Tientsin Exposition Hall—the skylit stairs, the theater, the bedrooms—are removed, what remains? I will discuss four program/form composites: the column, the cube, the cladding, and water. It will become clear that these are signifying units that move subversively between projects through the coded notations of architectural forms.

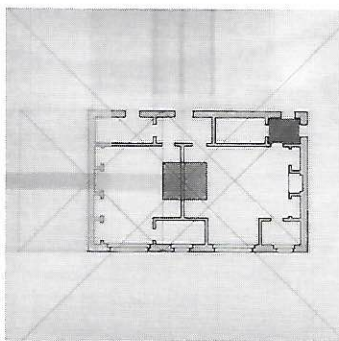
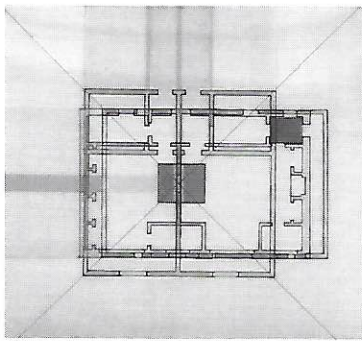
#### Architectural Codes

Architectural notations—drawings and models—carry information. At a minimum the conventional, overt message of the building's final form must be conveyed: "build stairs here;" "this is a bearing wall." But embedded within these notations may also be other, hidden, information with emblematic significance. Both the literal and the implicit aspects of notations allow the transference or transformation of meaning from one project to another. Underlying Loos's architecture are several primary "glyphs," encoded in drawings, that maintain common (hidden) meaning from project to project.

Gravagnuolo identifies several of Loos's recurring architectural themes which are pertinent here, including the a-scalar square, symmetrical disposition of elements, the column, the corner tower (I will argue these two are conflated in the Josephine Baker House), the roughly cubic monolithic block, and the use of marble.<sup>30</sup>

Several of these themes are inherent in the very act of drawing. For example, a square proposes certain geometric logics of subdivision in relation to its axes of symmetry—division into four squares deny an occupiable center while division into nine squares recognize one.<sup>31</sup> The placement of doors, columns, windows, and walls within a square carries significant information about hierarchical arrangement. Through training and the study of precedent, architects come to share common assumptions about the formal possibilities and meanings of the square.<sup>32</sup>

A second theme inherent in and evolving through drawing is the unfolding of symmetry. Symmetry proposes that



This page left: Both Tientsin Exhibition Hall bedroom types (linking and adjoining) are folded over Josephine Baker bedroom(s), accounting for the location of shared bed/door, separate bathrooms, and many wall locations.

This page right: Josephine Baker House bedroom(s) showing only traces of parasitic programs.

conditions occurring on opposite sides of a line of balance, an axis, are in some important way equal.<sup>33</sup> This is the logic used to render public buildings legible not only to architects but also to lay people.

A third graphic notation Loos used is the alternating black and white banding to establish a repetitive rhythm.<sup>34</sup> Here he applied ideas from one project to another parasitically, simply by repeating the graphic of stripes. On the subject of such repeating themes Loos wrote,

We work as best we can without pausing for a moment to worry about form. The best form always already exists and no one should be afraid of making use of it, even if its elements derive from someone else's work. We have enough original genius. Let's repeat ourselves ad infinitum.<sup>35</sup>

By drawing squares, symmetrical arrays, and stripes in an unconscious, repetitive manner, Loos also subconsciously imported other, more complex, ideas into the Josephine Baker project, developing a design that was unprecedented within his residential production.

The *act of making* such notations adds a crucial complication. Although Loos might have attempted to repress the presence of Josephine Baker's bodily experience within this building by using abstract, idealized geometries, by ignoring human scale, and by prescriptively controlling the occupation of the house (all ways of controlling the Other), he is physically implicated. His *own* body is inevitably present in the project, through the act of drawing. When Loos drew a square with an unarticulated center (the Josephine Baker elevation, the doubled bedrooms with a bed between), he denied the occupation of the center with his body, specifically, with his drawing hand. And when I redraw that same square, I understand its negation with *my* body.<sup>36</sup>

I will now draw 'drawn' conclusions about the Josephine Baker House in relation to Adolf Loos's other work. I have tried to recover Loos's primary body language, for in retracing the gestures of his hand, I have been led to see another set of programs within the Josephine Baker House.

### The Column

The column is one of the most pervasive and identifiable of all architectural elements. Its necessary verticality and elongated proportions have made comparisons between the column and

an upright person commonplace throughout Western architectural history. Indeed the language of classical architecture is heavily dependent on direct references to the human body throughout the repertoire of architectural elements. With the Caryatids, for example, the Greeks directly proposed that conquered people might hold up buildings. They then developed a system whereby the literal representation of the person could be removed, and yet gender-specificity maintained, through codified proportional abstraction.<sup>37</sup>

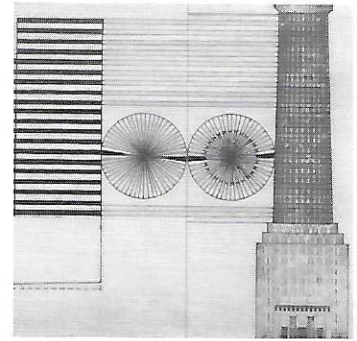
As we know, Renaissance theorists revisited these ideas and interjected the forms and proportions of the human body into many other aspects of the architectural project.<sup>38</sup> Alberti moved away from proportional analogies to anthropomorphic projection in his writings; Francesco Di Giorgio and Michaelangelo made drawings to demonstrate human figures embedded within columns and architectural ornament, and so forth.

An increasing fragmentation of the body became evident during the Enlightenment, a categorical segmentation that might be seen as running parallel to the encyclopedic segregation of knowledge inherent in the scientific project. Ledoux's rendered eye, which became the auditorium for a theater at Besancon, Lequeu's rigidly portrayed upper body embedded in a column, and Ledoux's *Maison de Plaisir*, which portrayed a phallus in plan, all serve as examples of this phenomenon. This use of anthropomorphic projection has acted historically to displace the human inhabitant by conceiving of the building itself as a body, or parts of a body, or a collection of bodies. By projecting one particular image of a body into the architectural object, the architect replaces the body in action with a frozen, docile body.

Citing Loos's dictum of "A horizontal line: a woman. A vertical line: a man penetrating her," we can speculate that Adolf Loos conflated the strategy of fragmentation—the tower as body part—with that of projection—column containing a human body—in the Josephine Baker House. I specifically refer to the cylindrical form above the entry which is proportionally similar both to a column and a tower. As types, both have occurred before in Loos's domestic projects. The cylinder as corner tower first appeared in the Villa Karma (1904-06) and the pairing of a column and a stair appeared in the Villa Strasser (1918-19).<sup>39</sup> However, the Baker House cylinder is most closely related to his entry to the Chicago Tribune Tower Competition of 1922. For this project, Loos

This page: Josephine Baker house tower/column adjacent to Chicago Tribune tower/column. Striped floor plan of Tribune Tower is used to mediate between the proportions of the two columns' stripes.

Opposite page: Chicago Tribune Tower/column folded over Josephine Baker tower/column.



84 proposed that tall buildings act as columns, so he designed a literal one. (It has been suggested he considered the double meaning of a newspaper column as well.) The audacity of this elevation is striking and, as will become obvious, contains an echo of the Josephine Baker House tower/column. But of more immediate interest is the typical floor plan drawn of the Tribune Tower project.

Looking at this plan, a strong visual parallel to the Josephine Baker House presents itself. The black and white banding, apparent in the Tribune Tower's elevation in glass and spandrel, is a pale trace of the bold stripes apparent in the drawing of the typical floor plan.<sup>40</sup> These stripes represent alternating cuts through windows and wall. They are serial, white following black following white following black, endlessly, without origin, hierarchy, or privilege. Here, in architectural notation is a literal turning, a trope in action.

The plan's stripes act as markers to account for a proportional relation between the Tribune Tower and the tower/column at the Josephine Baker House. Using the relative width of stripes in the Tribune Tower plan like a proportional divider, the striped elevation of the Tribune Tower/column matches that of the Josephine Baker House tower/column.<sup>41</sup> In other words, the elevation of the tower at the Josephine Baker house is a proportional reduction of the Tribune Tower.

If the columnar form is a transference from the Tribune Tower to the Josephine Baker House, what does it mean? Loos called the Tribune Tower a monument, saying "Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument. Everything else that fulfills a function is to be excluded from the domain of art."<sup>42</sup> He also said, in *Ornament and Crime*, that "all art is erotic." Thus, if the tower is a monument, all monuments are art, and all art is erotic, then, for Loos, the tower is erotic. The crossing of the crisp vertical form with its equally bold horizontal articulation reinforces its erotic content, which he described this way:

The first ornament invented, the cross, was of erotic origin. The first work of art, the first artistic act, which the first artist scrawled on the wall to give his exuberance vent. A horizontal line: the woman. A vertical line: the man penetrating her. The man who created this felt the same creative urge as Beethoven, he was in the same state of exultation in which Beethoven created the Ninth.<sup>43</sup>

Here Loos describes the physical act of making a particular mark (the cross) as an erotic act. The Josephine Baker House column is a vertical form intersecting and intersected by repeated horizontals. Could it then be, for Loos, drawn eroticism?

The codes of the Chicago Tribune Tower as monument/as art/as the erotic are embedded in its round cylindrical form set on a base, and in alternating black and white banding, evident in different ways in plan and section. This notational glyph emerged in 1922, primarily in a plan cut of the Tribune Tower project, and was echoed, transported and transformed through the act of drawing, in the Josephine Baker House.

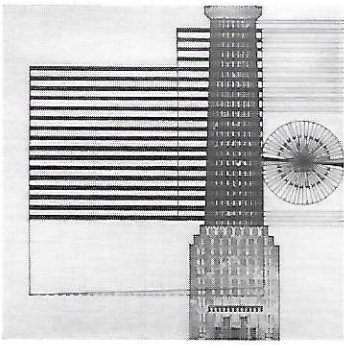
Despite the intensely packed form of the language, its meaning in the later project remains unsettled: Does the column embody an erect figure, striped black and white through cultural or sexual intermingling? Does the column refer more specifically to an erect phallus? Or, contra the good Dr. Freud, is the column merely a cylinder, an abstract Platonic solid made strictly without reference to the human body, similar, say, to a cube?<sup>44</sup>

#### The Cube

For architects, geometry authorizes form. While all geometries help regulate decision making, some are considered resistant to the whims of architectural fashion and the passage of time. Specifically, Platonic geometries—the square, triangle and circle, and their three dimensional projections, the cube, the cone, the cylinder, and the sphere—are thought to be ideal geometries. These forms reside in the realm of, and therefore promise, a deathless eternity. The human subject is extraneous to this world of cubes, spheres, and cones.

Following this philosophical lineage, one contemporary design method relies on the confluence of chaos theory and Xerox technology to measure objects against each other, thus negating the importance of human measurement in architecture. Loos's use of the square relies heavily on such self-referentiality.

The abstract, a-scalar definition of these geometries makes possible proportional relationships which completely avoid entanglement with the human subject. Beginning, again, in the Renaissance we see a great deal of attention to Platonic geometries, based on the merging of neo-Platonic thought within the Florentine Academy and studies of Roman ruins by northern Italian architects such as Palladio.



These same geometries were also used to demonstrate the perfection of the human form described by Vitruvius and made iconic in Leonardo's drawing of this theme.<sup>45</sup> With the publication of Renaissance treatises across Europe, Platonic ordering geometries became a part of the vocabulary of the architects of the Enlightenment, and of neoclassicists such as the German, Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

Here, we come back to Adolf Loos, an admirer of Schinkel's and of classicism. Loos's entire oeuvre, his houses in particular, use the cube as a primary determinant of form. So do his tombs. Remembering that Loos believed that only tombs and monuments are works of art, we might ask, is the use of the cube in the Josephine Baker House more like his houses or his tombs? Unlike his houses, the Dvorak Mausoleum is a simple cube made of black granite. It is his only use of black on the exterior of a project. (In an ironic splitting of this linguistic juxtaposition we find that Loos's own tomb will be a granite cube, though not black, while the selection of black marble for Baker's tombstone will cause a significant delay in her burial.)

The Josephine Baker House actually contains two cubes. One rests upon the base and contains the swimming pool. The second, apparent through analysis if not visual inspection, is embedded in the base. The embedded cube contains the salon cum exposition hall and the bedrooms cum hotel suite. It is striped black and white: half house and half tomb. If, for Loos, the tomb belongs to the realm of art and all art is erotic, then the tomb too is erotic. It thus contains the Freudian paradox of the life impulse (*Eros*) and the death impulse (*Thanatos*) within one form. One *striped* form. Loos says:

For the Chinese, the color of mourning is white; for us it is black. Consequently it would be impossible for our architects to produce a happy atmosphere with the color black.

When we come across a mound in the forest, six feet long and three feet wide, raised to a pyramidal form by means of a spade, we become serious and something in us says: Somebody lies buried here. *This is architecture.*<sup>46</sup>

The dimensions of the site, articulated by the plinth upon which the cube holding the swimming pool sits, and into which the hidden cube sinks, are very nearly a two by one

rectangle—the proportional equivalent of a six by three foot mound.

### Cladding

Adolf Loos addressed the question of the exterior in his 1910 essay "Architecture" by asserting:

When I was finally given the task of building a house, I said to myself: in its external appearance, a house can only have changed as much as a dinner jacket. Not a lot, therefore. . . . The house had to look inconspicuous. Had I not once formulated the sentence: He who is dressed in a modern manner is one who is least conspicuous.<sup>47</sup>

Loos affiliates with the theory of classicism not just in his call to modest, inconspicuous private architecture but, significantly, through the assumed parallel of proper bodies to proper buildings. Alberti says, "But in the private house modest materials should be used elegantly, and elegant materials modestly . . . . Not that precious materials should be completely renounced and banished; but they should be used sparingly in the most dignified places, like jewels in a crown."<sup>48</sup> Miriam Gusevich convincingly argues for the existence of a parallel transfer from proper buildings to proper bodies. She proposes that Loos's functionalism—an argument against ornament and decoration—is actually an argument *for* decorum, defined in the terminology of the evolving middle class. In her view, Loos advocates that a decorous subject replace a decorated object.<sup>49</sup>

That the elevation of the Josephine Baker House stands in bold contrast to Loos's writings is an unavoidable fact, even to the most generous critics. Munz, for example, eludes the problem this way, "Africa: that is the image conjured up more or less firmly by a contemplation of the model."<sup>50</sup> So begins Munz's description of the Josephine Baker house, yet as Colomina points out, he never quite identifies the qualities that lead him to this observation. But his speculations do include the citation of black and white horizontally striped marble.

I have suggested two explanations for the stripes so far. First, they act as a proportional fingerprint, precisely linking the tower/column with the Tribune Tower project. Second, they make ambivalent the role of the cube: half white and half black, it is neither a discrete residential exterior nor a tomb, yet again, it is both. A third obvious reading, given Loos's predilection for clothing analogies, is that

This page: Swimmer, Ichetucknee River.

Opposite page: Model of the proposed Josephine Baker House.



86 of a tattooed skin like the Papuan native in "Ornament and Crime." A fourth, and another body projection, is the mixing of skin colors. All of these speculations seek to situate this peculiar exterior within Loos's writings and projects. But with the exception of the drawn, though unspoken evidence of stripes in the Tribune Tower, a literal transfer of form-meaning is not immediately evident in his architecture.<sup>51</sup>

#### Water

Both Josephine Baker and Adolf Loos wrote about water.

In her 1929 novel entitled *My Blood in Your Veins*, Josephine Baker told the story of a black servant named Joan, and Fred, her white employer. Joan and Fred had been raised together and, when Fred was injured in an accident Joan donated blood to him. He thus had her blood in his veins. This book was written in part as a response to political and cultural events in Central and Eastern Europe in the late twenties. Here Baker characterized a situation in which:

. . . Topsy and Pat, the dogs, are black and white and eat from the same bowl. But not the people at the Oaks! Like Cinderella, Joan watches while others luckier than herself enjoy themselves. Fred brings his friends home to cavort around the swimming pool. His friends have all increased fortunes made by their parents, the kind of audacious immigrants who make America great and prove that fresh blood regenerates a country, giving new vigor to anemic, decadent civilizations."<sup>52</sup>

For Baker, swimming and mixing blood were two ways that people of different races could experience and proclaim underlying similarities. The swimming pool was the location to merge difference, to co-mingle.

This belief may well have been based on experience. For prior to commissioning Loos, Baker had lived in a home with an indoor swimming pool. The circumstance was her apartment at Number 77 Champs-Élysées, arranged by her then lover, Marcel Ballot, in 1926. "He set me up in an apartment I called my marble palace . . . . In the middle of the apartment there was a marble swimming pool which took two months to build. It cost a fortune, this pool."<sup>53</sup>

While Baker received visitors unselfconsciously (and apparently without erotic intentions) in her bath, Adolf Loos regarded the liquid with suspicion and respect. In 1898, just after his return from three years in America, he wrote an

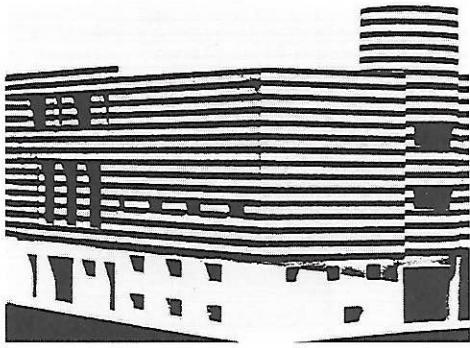
essay entitled "The Plumbers." There he proclaimed:

Gone is the terror of the mountains, the dread of danger, the fear of dust, forest-smells and fatigue. Gone is the fear of becoming dirty, the holy dread of water. . . . Instead of putting the cart before the horse, instead of spending money on art, let's try producing a culture. Let's put up baths next to the academies and employ bath attendants along with professors. A higher civilization will bring a higher form of art in its wake. . . .<sup>54</sup>

And in his 1910 essay "Architecture," while describing a farm scene Loos wrote, "Thus I ask: why is it that every architect, whether good or bad, desecrates the lake?"<sup>55</sup> For Loos, water was something powerful and primal. The act of civilization reduces fear of water, which makes water itself (hence "The Plumbers") a civilizing element.<sup>56</sup> The paradoxical conclusion is that the uncivilized fear water, yet this feared element—water—exerts a civilizing force. Again: that which is feared, civilizes. And the architect (whether good or bad) desecrates the lake, the water, that which is feared, that which civilizes. This is the water architect Adolf Loos used to separate and unite the column and the cube within the cladding of the Josephine Baker House.

It is a peculiar container for water, this pool. The plan of the primary public level describes it as *l'eau*, water, for the section cuts right through the water itself. The surface of the pool is inaccessible to the public. To enter the pool one must climb a set of stairs to the private realm, then descend again to the six feet deep watery volume. But there is an alternative means of access: vision. From the salon, a tunnel runs around the periphery of the pool, with windows for viewing the swimmer. Guests are thus invited to look, but not to mingle with the floating performer. Loos's Baker is a weightless object, to be looked upon, exhibited, exposed.<sup>57</sup> The program for this space resonates with the memory of Baker's choreographed opening in the Folies-Bergère in 1926:

An immense Easter egg, covered with flowers, was lowered from the ceiling. . . . The ball opened to reveal Josephine, nearly nude, nothing but a raffia skirt . . . on a mirror. . . . You could have heard a fly in that room . . . when Josephine, reflected in the mirrors and the lights, stood up and danced a sensational charleston. Mirrors multiplied the sight of her sublime body. All around us, we had thousands of Josephine's, reflections and shadows, dancing.<sup>58</sup>



Perhaps assuming the spirit of Baker herself, Beatriz Colomina suggests that windows within the swimming pool allow the swimmer to both receive and return the voyeuristic gaze through the window and its reflection: "Thus she sees herself being looked at by another: narcissistic gaze superimposed on a voyeuristic gaze. This erotic complex of looks in which she is suspended is inscribed in each of the four windows opening onto the swimming pool. Each, even if there is no one looking through it, constitutes, from both sides, a gaze."<sup>59</sup> But I suspect the swimmer's gaze would be blurred, both by the water's inability to refract clearly, and more importantly by competing sensory perceptions. The thrill of water against one's skin, cool, undulating in ripples, supporting and resisting the body's motions, surely challenge the primacy of the eye. But Loos designed it as a solitary pleasure, available to a lonesome Josephine Baker, watched by her guests.

While Baker sought a place to "cavort with friends," Loos provided instead the architectural embodiment of his own conflict. Both fearsome and civilizing, Loos's water becomes the site of separation. The boundary is drawn clearly, confirmed precisely by its visuality.

With this project Loos engaged the paradoxical quality of water he had identified thirty years earlier in "The Plumbers." The swimming pool is the frontier, described by Michel DeCerteau as a place where "bodies can be distinguished only where the 'contacts' of amorous or hostile struggles are inscribed on them. This is a paradox of the frontier: created by contacts, the points of difference between two bodies are also their common points. Conjunction and disjunction are inseparable in them."<sup>60</sup>

When DeCerteau proceeds to quote a poem he might well be describing Loos:

*One time there was a picket fence  
with space to gaze from hence to thence.*

*An architect who saw this sight  
approached it suddenly one night,*

*removed the spaces from the fence  
and built of them a residence.*

DeCerteau continues, "The architect's drive to cement up the picket fence, to fill in and build up 'the space in-between,' is also his illusion, for without knowing it he is working toward the political freezing of the place and there is nothing left for him to do, when he sees his work finished, but to flee, to *Afri- or Americoo*."<sup>61</sup>

The watery pool, a frontier between self and other, black and white, male and female, became, by its explicit architectural design, a place of separation, the demonstration of Lacan's concept of loss and of Loos's very palpable sense of loss, of separation between Self and Other.

But Loos foresaw its outcome, for in that same 1910 essay he continued:

And again I ask: why does the architect, the good one as well as the bad one, desecrate the lake? The architect, like almost every urban dweller, has no culture. He lacks the certainty of the farmer, who possesses culture. The urban dweller is an uprooted person.

By culture I mean that balance of man's inner and outer being which alone guarantees rational thought and action. I am due to give a lecture entitled: 'Why do the Papuans Have a Culture and Why do the Germans Lack One?'<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps in accord with the spirit of the times, theater critic Janet Flanner found a parallel result in Baker's development. In a review of her 1930 show, "Paris Qui Remu" ("Bustling Paris"), Flanner wrote, "On that lovely animal visage lies now a sad look, not of captivity, but of dawning intelligence."<sup>63</sup>

#### Epilogue

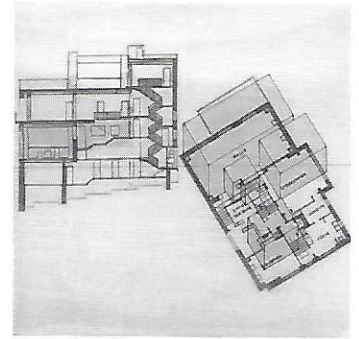
Two years later, in 1930, Adolf Loos designed the Muller house in Prague. The master bedroom bears traces of the Baker house. Separate dressing rooms flank the bedroom which is defined by a series of squares whose overlap occupies the site of Josephine Baker's bed. And the wall of the bath intrudes into the husband's dressing room, occupying the ghost of the entry to Josephine Baker's pool.

The next year, at the age of 61 Adolf Loos died of a chronic stomach problem.<sup>64</sup>

Josephine Baker did not build her Loos house. According to one biographer, a world tour made the project unfeasible. During her 1928-29 tour she traveled to Berlin, where her observations suggest empathy with Loos as he proposed a site

This page: Muller House section and axonometric of primary public spaces.

Opposite page: Josephine Baker House bedroom(s) section of axonometric of primary public spaces.



88 of watery loss, for she later remarked "In Berlin . . . two things left me with a dream-like impression. One was silent, the aquarium at the zoo, and the other deafening, the colossal Vaterland where all the countries of the world have their echo."<sup>65</sup>

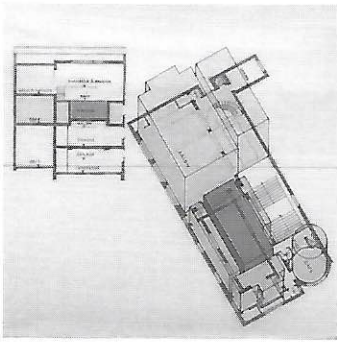
Baker continued to live in France throughout her life. During the Second World War she served as a member of the French Resistance in a patriotic gesture of appreciation towards her adopted homeland. She ended her war service entertaining Allied troops in North Africa and was instrumental in integrating her audiences, military and civilian, throughout her performing life. In the late 1940s she bought a chateau, Les Milandes, in the French countryside where she and her husband Jo Boullion adopted 12 children of different races, who she called her Rainbow Tribe. Following many years of professional decline she staged a phenomenal comeback performance in Paris, fifty years after her 1925 Parisian premier. After a preview in Monte Carlo, the show opened on April 8, 1975 to ecstatic reviews. Two days later Josephine Baker died in her sleep at the age of sixty-nine.

After an extraordinary funeral in Paris at the Madeleine, attended by thousands of people, her patroness Princess Grace took charge of Baker's burial in Monte Carlo. It took almost six months to select the proper black marble for her tomb. As a result, the body of Josephine Baker was finally buried on October 2, 1975, exactly fifty years after the night she first opened in Paris.<sup>66</sup>

#### NOTES

- 1 Hereinafter I will follow the tradition of the publication of this project and refer to the "Josephine Baker House" by both the familiar and proper name of the client. Both this project and the Tristan Tzara houses are so titled, while the Rufer, Moller, and Muller Houses are identified by proper names only. The ongoing, common practice of referring to women and blacks (and some exotic others) with assumed familiarity is even evident within an academic context.
- 2 Benedetto Gravagnuolo, *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works* (New York: Rizzoli, Inc., 1982).
- 3 Phyllis Rose, *Jazz Cleopatra, Josephine Baker in her Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 109.
- 4 The terms of their arrangement are vague. No published documentation asserts that Baker commissioned Loos. Apparently she was in the process of renovating her home and commiserated about the architect's plan with Adolf Loos, whom she knew socially. When he declared that he could design her "the best house in the world" she expressed surprise, as she apparently had not know he was an architect. Burkhardt Rukschcio and Roland Schachel, *Adolf Loos*, trans. Marianne Brausch (Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1982), 323.
- 5 Ludwig Munz and Gustav Kunstler, *Adolf Loos, Pioneer of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1966), 226.

- 6 Ibid.
- 7 My interest in this unbuilt project, historically considered idiosyncratic and therefore insignificant among Loos's production, was piqued by Beatriz Colomina's discussion of the Josephine Baker House in "Adolf Loos: Das Andere" in *Architecture and Body*, ed. Scott Marble et al. (New York: Rizzoli, Inc., 1982).
- 8 A picture of Freud's study, with a mirror is set in front of a window, can be found in Colomina's "Adolf Loos: Das Andere," op. cit.
- 9 Morris Berman, *Coming to Our Senses: Body and Spirit in the Hidden History of the West* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989), 29.
- 10 The evolution of the relation between the Modern and the Primitive within the architectural project is ably summarized in Anthony Vidler, *The Writing of the Walls: Architectural Theory in the Late Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1987), Chapter One.
- 11 Jean-Claude Baker and Chris Chase, *Josephine: The Hungry Heart* (New York: Random House, 1993), 16. He speculates, based on hospital records in St. Louis and a comparison of her skin color with that of her siblings, that her father may have been white. She never used the proper name of her mother's husband (not her father) and adopted, instead, the name of her second husband, Baker, as her own. She referred to her father-in-law as her father.
- 12 See the film "Zou-Zou" and the novel *My Blood in Your Veins*, for example.
- 13 Rukschcio, op. cit., 78.
- 14 Munz, op. cit., 153-54.
- 15 Adolf Loos, "Architecture," in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*, ed. Yehuda Safran and Wilfried Wang (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1985), 106.
- 16 In his 1903 book *Sex & Character*, Loos's friend Otto Weininger wrote "The problem of woman and the problem of the Jews are absolutely identical with the problem of slavery, and they must be solved the same way. No one should be oppressed, even if the oppression is of such a kind as to be unfelt as such. The animals about a house are not "slaves," because they have no freedom in the proper sense of the word which could be taken away." It is probably safe to assume Loos was at least acquainted with the premise of this writing. Otto Weininger, *Sex & Character* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1906), 338.
- 17 Munz, op. cit., 195.
- 18 Kenneth Frampton, "Introduction: Adolf Loos and the Crisis of Culture," in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 12.
- 19 Gravagnuolo, op. cit., 191.
- 20 The formal inflection of the 1984 Museum of Modern Art Retrospective and the ensuing furor within the art world might serve as a caution for other disciplines.
- 21 Who owns the project? Whether or not Baker commissioned this project, there is no doubt she habitually collected designers' productions. One would not describe a gown she wore as "Balenciaga's gown, but rather as Josephine Baker's Balenciaga. Architects, on the other hand, typically name the author the owner of the project.
- 22 Adolf Loos, "Architecture" in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 107-8.
- 23 Gravagnuolo, op. cit., 188.
- 24 Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988), 292.
- 25 Adolf Loos, "Vernacular Art" in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 113.
- 26 Beatriz Colomina, "On Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffmann: Architecture in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Raumplan versus Plan Libre*, ed. Max Risselada (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 67.
- 27 This interior analysis is carried out much more thoroughly in Johan van de Beek's, "Adolf Loos—patterns of town houses," in *Raumplan versus Plan Libre*, Max Risselada, ed. (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 27-46.
- 28 Adolf Loos, "The Principle of Cladding," in *Spoken Into the Void*, Collected Essays 1897-1900 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988), 66.
- 29 Munz, op. cit., 195.



- 30 Gravagnuolo, op. cit., 22-23.
- 31 This strategy of formal assessment is canonically articulated by Colin Rowe in *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa*, where he shows the reassertion of classicism (a nine-square logic) through modernist villas such as the Villa Savoye. *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988), 1-29.
- 32 In Book Three, Chapter One of his *Ten Books* Vitruvius writes, "And just as the human body yields a circular outline, so too a square figure may be found from it. For if we measure the distance from the soles of the feet to the top of the head, and then apply that measure to the outstretched arms, the breadth will be found to be the same as the height, as in the case of plane surfaces which are perfectly square." *The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1960), 73.
- 33 In *The Writing Of the Walls* (op. cit.) Vidler describes the programmatic substitutions that occurred in symmetrical plans during the eighteenth century, with the ensuing shifts in meaning. See particularly pages 35-42.
- 34 Eisenman discusses the difference between an a-b-a rhythm, with classical inflection, and an a-b-a-b rhythm without a point of ending or beginning, in a conversation about the Palazzo Chiericati. See *Lotus International*, no. 40 (New York: Rizzoli International, 1983).
- 35 Loos, "Heimatkunst," 1914, found in Gravagnuolo, op. cit., 22.
- 36 This is a fundamentally different mode of understanding than either the verbal or the visual, a mode of knowing available to architects but largely ignored.
- 37 See George Hersey, *The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988).
- 38 For a discussion of the gendering of such bodies, see Diana Agrest, "Architecture from Without: Body, Logic, and Sex" in *Assemblage 7* (1988): 29-41.
- 39 The relation between the corner towers has been articulated by Gravagnuolo, op. cit., 192, and the pairing of stairs and columns by van de Beek, op. cit., 31.
- 40 The entry foyer of the Villa Karma (1904) also exhibits concentric rings of black and white striped bands, and is the earliest appearance of this glyph. This early project has been largely overlooked by current theorists, perhaps because it was a renovation. However, it contains several themes revisited in the Josephine Baker House, and shares what Gravagnuolo identifies as "the 'pagan' rediscovery of the cult of the body, expressed in the architecture by an allusion to the Roman spirit" (192), which is especially evident in the opulent treatment of the bath in the Villa Karma. The client, psychiatrist Theodor Beer, reportedly made substantial contributions to the design of the project until he was forced to leave the country to escape allegations of a sexual offense. Gravagnuolo speculates that his contribution "is to be sought in a thin vein of irrationalism that slips through the highly controlled mesh of this architecture. . . ." (112) The Villa Karma merits further study, if only because the layering of new spaces around its outside walls, and particularly the resulting ambiguous interior/exterior windows, suggest an early precedent for later interior windows so widely discussed today.
- 41 A drawn syllogism: As the Tribune Tower window is to spandrel in elevation, so window is to wall in plan. The bands in the Tribune Tower plan are scaled to match striped divisions in the circular partial plan in the Josephine Baker House. These striped markers are then rolled out in elevation: then, as window is to spandrel in the Tribune Tower so white is to black in the Josephine Baker elevation. The number of stripes match from one elevation to the other, *except* the Tribune Tower has an a-b-a-b rhythm and the Josephine Baker House elevation has an a-b-a rhythm. See note on classical and modern rhythmic sequences above.
- 42 Loos, "Architecture" in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 108.
- 43 Munz, op. cit., 226.
- 44 See John Whiteman, "On the Classical Representation of the Human Soul and Its Denial" in *The Eisenman Studios at the GSD* (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- 45 "For if a man be placed flat on his back, with his hands and feet extended, and a pair of compasses centred at his navel, the fingers and toes of his two hands and feet will touch the circumference of a circle described therefrom. And just as the human body yields a circular outline, so too a square figure may be found from it. For if we measure the distance from the soles of the feet to the top of the head, and then apply that measure to the outstretched arms, the breadth will be found to be the same as the height, as in the case of plane surfaces which are perfectly square." Vitruvius, op. cit., 73.
- 46 Loos, "Architecture," in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 108.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 107.
- 48 Alberti, op. cit., 293.
- 49 "Loos condemned the modern use of ornament as kitsch, and kitsch itself as a crime, as violence to the object, transforming it into a fetish reeking of sado-masochistic perversions and necrophilia. These crimes are decried as a violation of civilized norms, of decorum. Thus for the sake of decorum, Loos called for the banning of *decoration*." (123) The argument is richly elaborated in Miriam Gusevich, "Decoration and Decorum, Adolf Loos's Critique of Kitsch," *New German Critique* 43 (1987): 119-120.
- 50 Munz, op. cit., 195.
- 51 However, a description of stripes does occur in one project. His wife Lina's bed room, designed in 1903, is draped, floor to ceiling, in striped white cambric: "In the bedroom the maximum effect was achieved with the help of very simple materials: plain blue rugs, white curtains in 'striped cambric.'" (Rukschcio and Schachel, op. cit., 431.) On the floor, and merging with the base of the bed, is a continuous rug of fur. Another Viennese who associated women and fur was Oscar Kokoshka. He made a life-sized female doll of fur, an effigy of his lover Alma Mahler, and in due time, he buried it.
- 52 Quotation by Phyllis Rose, describing Baker's theme in Rose, op. cit., 135.
- 53 Baker, op. cit., 137.
- 54 Munz, op. cit., 219 and 221.
- 55 Loos, "Architecture" in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 104.
- 56 In this context, it is curious that the above-mentioned typical floor plan of the Chicago Tribune Tower competition, the one with alternating black and white stripes, contains one written note, "PIPES," apparently referring to a plumbing chase. Given the schematic and idealistic nature of the proposal, such attention to a pragmatic concern would generally be considered inappropriate.
- 57 Years later, Baker would allow her own children to be viewed through a picture window by tourists at Les Milandes, much to the dismay of some visitors. Baker, op. cit., 333.
- 58 Baker, citing an account by singer Suzy Solidor, op. cit., 136.
- 59 Colomina, "Adolf Loos: Das Andere," op. cit., 11.
- 60 DeCerteau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 127.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 128.
- 62 Loos, "Architecture" in Safran and Wang, op. cit., 104.
- 63 Baker, op. cit., 171.
- 64 Gravagnuolo reports complications of a venereal disease Loos contracted as early as 1911 grew worse, and implies this may have contributed to his death, Gravagnuolo, op. cit., 31.
- 65 Baker, op. cit., 160.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 492.

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