

DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTION: THE ARCHITECTURE OF RAPHAEL SORIANO

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“Raphael Soriano is one of the most influential architects of the modern tradition in the United States and yet, although he had high prominence during the height of his career in the fifties along with Richard Neutra and Rudolf Schindler, his name has fallen into near oblivion in recent decades. This is partly because of Raphael Soriano’s own personal idiosyncrasies, and partly, because most of his key buildings have been demolished or altered beyond recognition.” (Wolfgang Wagener, 1998)

With the research help of Wolfgang Wagener, the students in our computer graphics class are using form•Z, 3D Studio, and Premiere to document and interpret the work of Raphael Soriano. These images are from a class currently underway in fall semester, 1998, at USC. The students are responsible for modeling, rendering, and animating (with the help of GIFBuilder), their buildings in form•Z, with an emphasis on exterior form. Then they model, render, and animate their projects in 3D Studio concentrating on the interior and interpreting how the building might have been furnished. Other studies covered the use of QuickTime VR and Web page development. Additional work will be done to make the work more “realistic” in response to critiques by Wagener. The next stage of the project is to explain the important features of the building through the use of Premiere. Students may choose to use a purely documentary style or MTV approach or other presentation “style” as long as they clearly define the intent of the presentation and then execute it.

As we have often seen by other ACADIA members, our pedagogical approach goes beyond technical knowledge of a particular software to include explorations into architectural theory and design in the construction of computer models. In addition, we hope that the work produced will be of use towards the understanding and appreciation of Raphael Soriano’s legacy.

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Image Credits

1. Chris Dalbey, 3D Studio, McCauley House
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4. Wanfung Chan, form•Z, Eichler House
5. Yuan Chen, 3D Studio, Eichler House
6. Yan Ma, form•Z, Lukens House



