Design Parti for Artist’s Residence –Michelle Liechty

**Phase 1- Analysis**
I began my design process by examining Steven Holl’s Fukuoka Housing project. I enjoyed his use of form as well as his use of hinged space. Furthering my research into hinged space, I found Hanrahan & Meyer’s Holley Loft. In Holley Loft, the large rectangular space is subdivided into both private and public spaces by the use of solid walls, glass and steel framed walls and hinged/sliding partitions. I enjoy both architects’ use of form and open subdivisions, allowing the client to interpret the space as needed, while also giving the design a formal and finalized feel.

*Left: Steven Holl’s Fukuoka Housing*

*Below: Hanrahan Meyer’s Holley Loft*

http://www.stevenholl.com/PT099_1C.htm
http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/1999/un-privatehouse/project_08.html

**Phase 2- Description**
My design has gleaned from the clean, formal geometries of both analyzed spaces in order to create a new system of hinged spaces and forms beneficial to my client. The entire plan and sections are based off of a 2sf grid, by which all -geometries are created. Interior spaces, like in Holl and H&M are left open aside from sliding and hinged panels, which can be moved back or expanded dependant on the client’s needs. Unlike with Holl and H&M, being part of an apartment complex does not encumber the exterior massing of my building. This allows the exterior walls to continue the hinged theme in either function or implied form. (Images of an exterior hinged wall study)

**Phase 3- Evolution**

From my work on ordering a 9-Square Grid, I found that I too often pushed symmetry in my design, leaving it somewhat flat and without personality (see image at left). I wanted to maintain this purity of form and design within my new grid system, while avoiding its monotony. My first concept for the artist’s space was too focused on function and trying not to create a symmetric building. In this sense I succeeded, but the building lacked any direction and was certainly not very compelling. For my final design, I basically scrapped my concept and started with a new parti and outlook, keeping what worked from past projects(geometric pattern play) but pushing it further.

**Phase 4- Personal Reflection**
I did not realize when I decided to work with hinges, how difficult this assignment was going to be for me. The hinged spaces work two-dimensionally on one level while 3 dimensionally on another. I really needed to push myself to expand the parti beyond flat walls with interplaying geometries, to three dimensional forms with interesting geometries. If I were to rework this project, I’d develop an overall massing onto which I’d then apply the materials and geometries in section. I also ran into issues with functionality. As a product designer, if given a set of functional design criteria, I will follow the client’s requests precisely, forsaking the design at function’s expense. It was surprising how much I would allow these constraints to limit my creative process. In the end, I feel that constrained my initial design process and inevitably forced myself to compromise part of my design for the sake of others. I wish I had found a way to balance all of my constraints earlier in the design process.