

**WINKING MY EYES**

**On the drawings in Architecture**

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“To see a World in a grain of sand,  
And a Heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And Eternity in an hour.”

How many times have I repeated this beautiful poem by William Blake to my students, trying to inculcate them with how much of the ineffable the best Architecture has. “To see a World in a grain of sand” has quite a bit to do with what a diagram is in relation to the project that it explains to us. While the dictionary says that diagram is a “graphic figure that explains a specific phenomenon”, knowing how complex constructed architecture is, we are surprised by the diagram’s capacity, as a small and simple drawing, to express so much. Like the grain of sand does in regard to the world.

I have written time and time again that Architecture is built idea. And to build these ideas, one needs design plans that can express what and how this reality is. These drawings are like anatomical cross-sections of the new architectural body. They are the development of other, simpler drawings that defined the project in a more general manner before. And if we keep pulling the thread, we reach a key moment: the beginning. There, the very schematic drawings appear which are the diagrams. The diagram is the key drawing that contains within it the seed for the entire project. It would be like the fetus in which the heart already beats, in which the being that is going to be born, further developed, already appears wholly complete. That is the diagram in a work of architecture.

In my architecture, diagrams have played an important role. And whenever I am asked for documentation to publish a project, I include some diagram to explain my intentions clearly.

The diagram expresses the idea precisely. It is the first concretion from thought to reality. When I draw a diagram, it seems as though I wink my eyes in the attitude that Shakespeare describes so well at the beginning of his beautiful Sonnet 43:

“When most I wink, then do my eyes best see,  
For all the day they view things unrespected.”