Waiting for Ruin

Joseph Richard Conway
“It is no accident that the artist comes to terms with a tension between the expectation harbored by custom and the introduction of new ways of doing things...

...We shall have to ask ourselves what follows from this unity of what is past and what is present.”

(Gadamer, The Relevance of the Beautiful)
In an adaptive reuse project, how can historic architecture and new construction inform and enhance one another?
By designing with an understanding of how time and memory are affected by materials and the way they age, an adaptive reuse project can entwine historic and contemporary architecture.
Gallery and Theater for Surrealist Art
Not every building can become a museum to its former self. In a culture where antiquated buildings are commonly demolished, an old factory would sooner be torn down than be preserved. The ever-increasing demand for function in modern buildings makes historic buildings obsolete. Designing for decay, adaptive reuse combines new construction and old architecture to mutually enhance the qualities of each. This approach to construction can create a unique precedent that reveals value in abandoned structures; giving them new purpose.
Adaptive reuse provides a medium for the cohabitation of old and new history where they can inform and improve one another.
Entwining modern architecture with the existing building draws from history while simultaneously contributing its own inspiration and ultimately developing into a new adaptive architecture. Beyond the practical argument for sustainability and the socially aware argument for preserving our history; is an argument for saving a more ephemeral quality of older buildings - they are experientially different from buildings of today.
Historic structures provide limitations to modern building typologies but if adapted properly can adjust to changing needs over time. The addition of contemporary architecture is necessary for addressing these limitations—eventually leading to architecture that reaches across time.
“The ruin of a building means that where the work of art is dying, other forces and forms, those of nature, have grown; and that out of what art still lives in the ruin and what of nature already lives in it, there has emerged a new whole, a characteristic unity.”

(Georg Simmel, The Ruin)
The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life

1. The Monumental View: imitating the past with the clear purpose of molding one’s life after some superficial greatness.

2. The Antiquarian View: revering the past with the sole intention of preserving as much as possible.

3. The Critical View: a balance between consciousness of the past and recognition of the needs of the present.
Process
Basement

1. Entrance - 506 s.f.
2. Foyer - 1,836 s.f.
3. Coat Check - 336 s.f.
4. Cafe - 1,656 s.f.
5. Restrooms - 1,404 s.f.
6. Theater - 5,200 s.f.
7. Security - 2,520 s.f.
8. Storage - 1,820 s.f.
9. Mechanical - 1,300 s.f.
Level 1

1. Exhibition Hall - 5,480 s.f.
2. Emergency Stairs - 200 s.f.
4. Restrooms - 364 s.f.
5. Storage - 2,520 s.f.
6. Theater Entrance
7. Loading Dock
8. Rentable Studio - 436 s.f./ 500 s.f.
Level 2

1. Gallery - 3,380 s.f.
2. Emergency Stairs - 200 s.f.
4. Restrooms - 364 s.f.
5. Office - 2,520 s.f.
Level 3

1. Gallery - 3,380 s.f.
2. Emergency Stairs - 200 s.f.
4. Restrooms - 364 s.f.
5. Office - 2,520 s.f.
Level 4

1. Gallery - 3,380 s.f.
2. Emergency Stairs - 200 s.f.
4. Restrooms - 364 s.f.
Level 5

1. Gallery - 3,380 s.f.
2. Emergency Stairs - 200 s.f.
4. Restrooms - 364 s.f.
Level 6

1. Gallery - 3,380 s.f.
2. Emergency Stairs
4. Restrooms - 364 s.f.
Gallery Wall Detail

A: Existing Steel Column
B: Channel Glass
C: HVAC Floor Return
D: Existing Steel Beam
E: Wood Slat Ceiling
F: New Steel Floor Joists
G: Concrete Floor Deck

Structure
Questions?