I AM A DREAMER.

You are very kind to honor me, especially because my dream is so ethereal.

I have spent most of my life following this dream, and trying above all, to make it practical.
In some small ways, I have succeeded in making it practical. But what remains undone, is the larger part, the dream which I have struggled to make possible, where I have failed so often, but when the truth and rightness of this dream may survive long enough so that you, and others, within the next few generations, make this dream come true.

So I speak of this dream, and what I have not yet accomplished, in the hope that you can accomplish it . . . as well as speaking of the few fragments of my work where I have been able to make the dream come true . . .

Introduction

During the last thirty years, I have spent so much time writing and speaking about wholeness. Many people, I think, begin to understand what it means. But I have not yet really done my best to explain what it means. I mean, explained it so clearly that anyone can understand what it is, what it refers to, what its significance is, how to experience it. As much as I have tried, I have not quite managed to explain it well. That is partly because it is hard. I have not explained it as well, as I should have, even to myself.

So that is what I shall try to do today.

You will see what a hard job it is, if I say that Wholeness, in an important sense, is a modern word for God. The word God has become unpleasant to some people's ears: it conveys too much of the old man with the long white beard, or of the all-powerful figure who makes things work. It seems archaic and irrelevant.

But if I rephrase it and ask:

How are we to be, and live, and remain, connected to the Whole?

That is the purpose of architecture.

Wholeness is a more attractive word, to our ears, and it is able to be in touch with our modern sensibilities.

But merely from seeing that Wholeness and God are perhaps two words for one thing, you will see the enormous task we face, in trying to give a coherent, and sensible explanation of it.

But it is, necessarily, the fountain and origin of all architecture. So I cannot avoid trying. And, I can safely say that there is no real way for us to get out of our present urban mess, without venturing into this territory, and taking the bull by the horns, and trying to grapple with what these things truly mean, so that we can understand them.

And that means, understand them well enough so that we can explain it, in common sense language, to another person.

Then it may, for the first time in the modern era, be possible for us to act upon this knowledge, and building lawns, gardens, houses, neighborhoods, even regions, in relation to this wholeness – and do it so it is not merely an intellectual claim, but a realized activity, that makes a different world.

The Problem

The deepest wound of our era, possibly the greatest one human beings have ever experienced, is our loss of identity and our loss of connection to the whole – both the loss of identity of the community, and the loss of identity of the individual, the loss of identity of a single window, or a single door. Though trying, through all kinds of means to prove themselves unique and special, nevertheless in the world of mass production, the vast majority of people are not able to be secure in themselves: the ground has been swept away from under their feet.

That is what this lecture is about. That, and the question, What can we do about it?

CNU, in its present form -- what it builds and what it advocates -- does not reconnect us to the whole. It is not calm or beautiful. It is not, yet, something that deeply touches us, even though it contains so many excellent assumptions and provisions.

The Present CNU Solution

What is good about CNU, and what is not so good.

New urbanist code: A rigid set of rules, which use highly authoritarian language. Configurations which are to be copied mechanically, adhered to and enforced, and almost entirely independent of context.
A highly mechanical flavor, in spite of the effort to create something better.
They look better, but they do not <u>feel</u> greatly better. The alienation one experiences is still roughly the same.

This arises because planners, architects, and developers who undertake work within the framework of the CNU code, is still doing the same thing as before, except possibly changing a few important features:
Changing, for example:
- Roof shape
- Mixed use
- Windows
- More pedestrian areas
- Form of Sidewalks
- Driveways

The do not solve the problem – the loss of identity and connection to the whole – because:
- The Charette is not from the people
- Windows are not from the inside
- Ownership is still bought from the developer as pre-sold, pre-determined package
- Lack of natural variation that authentically connects people
- Money is still the driving force, and profit
- 60 houses, at cost of £100,000 each, sold for £200,000 each, developer pockets £4 million architect gets maybe £120,000.
- The purpose is twisted: high density to create more land value, hence more profit.

The worst thing is that it is a thing without heart, because it is a machine for making money, and the concern for people is only an illusion.

Copying traditional forms does not help much. One of the features of the plans generated by current CNU methods is that they are artificial. This comes from the impulse to copy ancient looking ground plans, with cut changes of angle, random-like configurations, and "charm". The trouble is that this kind of painted on charm is not charming. What makes for genuine charm is something that arises from real forces, and can be felt to be completely appropriate because it arises from positions in the land. That requires a different generative philosophy, which will result in something that will then be understood, and felt, as real.

The CNU's approach involves the combination and recombination of mechanically created parts – the stuff of 19th and 20th century theories of physics, chemistry, biology: the assembly of things from prefabricated parts.

Such a process does not address – can never address – the real problem: loss of identity and connection to the whole.

What is needed to solve the real problem?

Ownership
Ownership of common land and streets
Ability to modify your own house
Ability to have a community forming and controlling (v. Co-housing which is still sterile)
A live thing coming from the people, and coming from the land.
Gradual flow of money
Something which visibly arises from the whole and so make you proud to be there.

Unfoldings are the key – the essence of a new kind of code: generative code. These unfoldings are the means to reconnect with the whole. Following them step by step, from the beginning of a project, takes us – step by step – to recovery of the identities we have lost. Of self, of individuals, of neighborhoods, regions…

This requires:

- An awareness that each part is shaped by the whole.
- An awareness of how large that whole is.
- Awareness that each part has to "help" the larger whole.
- A consequent awareness that each part is unique according to its configuration in the larger whole.
- A mental awareness, by the builders, and by the people living there, that every part, and every part of every part, is shaped according to its presence in the whole – with the result that no two places are ever alike.
- A delivery system that is capable of acting like this.
- An administrative system that is capable of it.
- A construction process and contract process which is capable of working like this.
- The architect, or developer, or builder, must then be conscious of this action of the whole, and must work to support this action of the whole at every stage.
- As this happens there is a certain sensation, akin to enlightenment, in which the builder, or architect, or developer, takes pleasure in this being part of the out-flowing and unfolding of the largest whole.
- That in turn creates union with the whole, or, as it used to be called, union with God.

Perhaps The Core Of The Argument

- Each part is influenced and shaped by the whole, and by its position in the whole
- Each part helps to increase the beauty and coherence of the whole
- God: Enlarges and sanctifies the larger whole.
- Not Separateness, one of the 15 principles from *The Nature of Order*, connects each whole to the universe.

How does nature achieve this?
The feathers on a bird according to the place on the body.
The size of waves according to the distance from the shore.
The type of clouds according to their height in the sky.

How do we achieve this?
There are two ways we can see the relation between the whole and the parts:

1. The whole influences, and shapes, the parts that occur in it, according to their position in the whole.
2. The parts are modified within the whole, in order to help the coherence of the whole. This coherence may be expressed in terms of energetics, communication, in terms of its visual coherence, .
    These two are not identical. But in a living thing, the influence goes both ways, both up and down.

The window movie and the new drawing of the parts connected by the window.

Of course we must ask what kinds of implementation are capable of having this effect. Getting this to happen in a machine-like process is almost impossible.

The following fail.
Contracts
Planning
Rules and zoning
Setbacks
Driveway standards
Stair width
Fabricated parts
Standard procedures (stud framing, for example).
Panelised wall construction.
Standard plans

The following succeed

Must Trust People's Judgment

In addition to implementation procedures that are friendly to wholeness and unfolding, we must also trust people's judgment.

You must love the things which people do, no matter who they are. One of the worst aspects of us architects, is that we believe we must design everything, and do not genuinely love the funky things which people make. But the beauty of the indigenous places we take as models, is precisely that they really and truly come from the honest likes and dislikes of ordinary people, without any architectural censorship.

To solve the real problem, you have to let go, to take the dead hand away.