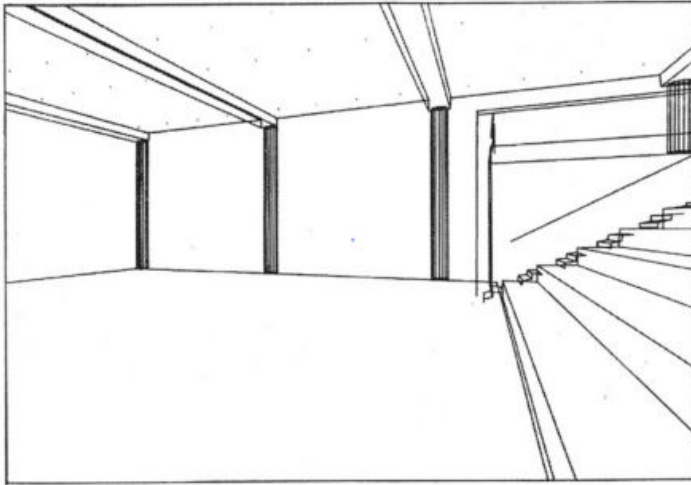


When the GSD Designed Software: Experiments in Computer Vision, 1965-1991



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Between 1965 and 1991, the Laboratory for Computer Graphics and Spatial Analysis* involved Harvard and the GSD in the mercurial business of software development. Both academic and entrepreneurial, the Lab created dozens of pieces of software – from minimal, experimental apps to general purpose packages destined to redefine entire markets. Throughout this ceaseless, even excessive production ran a determination to model the activity of planners, designers, and architects in bits and bytes – in short, to teach computers to see the way we do.

*1965-1968: Laboratory for Computer Graphics

*1968-1991: Laboratory for Computer Graphics and Spatial Analysis

As you might expect, both “design” and “computation” were redefined along the way. Today it seems obvious that each implicates the other; the Laboratory for Computer Graphics and Spatial Analysis helped usher in our computational second nature. Reflecting on the images collected here – each the output of software tailor-made to carry out a particular type of analysis and produce a particular type of image – exposes the work required to connect design to computation. It could have been (and still can be!) done differently.

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