

Irish Architectural Models

Representation, Communication and Fascination

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Declaration of Originality

This dissertation is submitted by the undersigned to the Institute of Art Design & Technology, Dun Laoghaire in partial fulfilment of the examination for the BA (Honours) in 3D Design, Modelmaking and Digital Art – DL828. It is entirely the author's own work except where noted and has not been submitted for an award from this or any other educational institution.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the role of architectural models within the architectural sector and beyond, while also exploring the relationship between architectural models and people. Each chapter focuses on a different architectural model which has been fabricated by an Irish architectural firm, modelmaker or artist. This includes models of the Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC created by McCullough Mulvin Architects, the DLR Lexicon created by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects and 'Babel' created by Aidan Lynam.

The chapters highlight the significance of architectural models by categorizing them into their unique methods of representation, communication and fascination. The major topics relating to architectural models covered in this thesis are representation, communication and fascination, however, in each chapter I also delve into subtopics that are pertinent to each model. Chapter 1, Architectural Models as a Form of Representation - The Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC by McCullough Mulvin Architects, focuses on the theoretical terminology of visual representation, bricolage, generative model making, immediacy and hypermediacy. Chapter 2, Architectural Models as a Form of Communication - DLR Lexicon by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects, focuses on the theoretical terminology of presentation models, comprehension of scale and the three dimensional language of architectural models. Finally, Chapter 3, Architectural Models as a Form of Fascination - Babel by Aidan Lynam, focuses on the theoretical terminology of miniaturisation, visual representation, scale and exhibition.

My thesis has been largely impacted by the work of Bradley Starkey, João Miguel Couto Duarte and Susan Stewart, who each speak of the definitive qualities models possess that are unlike any other medium or art form. In our society which is growing evermore visual, it is important to highlight both the impact and effectiveness that visual aids have within a professional and public context. My aim is to bring attention to the past neglect of the study of architectural models and emphasise the positive impact that architectural models, and more specifically, Irish architectural models, have within the architectural sector and beyond.

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Introduction

Throughout the history of architectural academia the study of architectural models has been overshadowed by the study of architectural drawings. Architectural models have been comparatively neglected as they are not attributed the same academic regard as architectural drawings. Models are closely associated with material and construction, while drawings are associated with the intellectual thought process and so a thorough analysis and theorization of architectural models that would rival that of architectural drawings has not been performed. Bradley Starkey speaks of this disregard for architectural models when he states:

Drawings were associated with the intellectual, and came to be a recognised medium through which architects could elevate their minds and consequently, the status of the profession. Conversely, models were more closely associated with the material and were therefore accorded a lower status.¹

Emphasis was not placed on the importance of learning and understanding through visual practices and material manipulation in past studies of the architectural sector. However, traditional methods of learning and development are becoming outdated in our modern society, as more emphasis is being placed upon thinking through doing and so models can now be placed at the forefront of architectural learning along with architectural drawings. Architectural models have always been crucial to the learning process, yet have been overlooked in the field of academic study in favour of the traditional process of architectural drawing due to past prejudices. Architectural models deserve recognition for the essential role they play in the architectural industry and beyond.

In the following chapters I intend to highlight the significance of architectural models. I will be categorizing models into their unique methods of representation, communication and fascination. During the course of the following three chapters I will be referring to three architectural models as points of study and reference. Two of these models are representations of buildings that exist in Ireland today, the Beaufort Maritime and Energy

¹ Starkey, Bradley. "Architectural Models: Material, Intellectual, Spiritual." *Architectural Research Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3-4, 2005, p. 266.

Research Laboratory UCC in Ringaskiddy, County Cork and the DLR Lexicon in Dún Laoghaire, County Dublin. The third model differs from the previous two examples as it is a sculptural art piece entitled 'Babel' that is a commentary on Ireland's property boom and represents many notable buildings in Dublin City. Each of these models has been designed and fabricated by an Irish architectural firm, modelmaker or artist. I have chosen these examples to highlight the impact Irish architectural models have on our society and to showcase the talent Irish architects and artists have offer to the architectural sector.

Chapter 1 focuses on architectural models as a form of representation and the relationship between the architectural firm and the model, while using the architectural model of the Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC created by McCullough Mulvin Architects as a point of reference. This chapter discusses the ease of understanding that architectural models create as representational aids for architects during their design process, through the practices of generative modelmaking and bricolage. The focus of the chapter is on the importance of learning through objects and how physical material manipulation can aid the architect in achieving a cohesive design.

Chapter 2 focuses on architectural models as a form of communication between an architectural firm and a public audience, using the architectural model of the DLR Lexicon created by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects and located in the Lexicon building as a point of reference. This chapter examines how architectural models are universally comprehensible due to the wide spread comprehension of scale and their lack of necessity for a spoken language. This chapter also examines the role of models within the planning permission process and their use as a method of communication with the public.

Chapter 3 focuses on architectural models as a form of fascination for a public audience, using the architectural model 'Babel' created by Aidan Lynam as a point of reference. The chapter explores our inherent fascination with miniaturised versions of our world and how architectural models are employed in museum and cultural centre settings as educational and informational aids. Chapter 3 is distinctive as it discusses the architectural model outside of an

architectural context and showcases the importance of architectural models not only as an architect's design tool but as an art form.

The intellectual foundation of this thesis has been provided by Bradley Starkey, João Miguel Couto Duarte and Susan Stewart.² Each of these scholars has shaped my thinking on the role of the architectural model in our society in a different way. Bradley Starkey discusses the ability of an architectural model to unite intellectual and visual dimensions. João Miguel Couto Duarte discusses the phenomenon of scale comprehension and the creation of our living environments through the use of architectural models. Susan Stewart discusses the inherent levels of enchantment encapsulated within miniatures and our fascination with this quality.

Ultimately this thesis will be exploring the role of architectural models within the architectural profession and beyond. It will examine how their function differs depending on the context they are placed in and their importance in the lives of architects and laypeople alike.

²Couto Duarte, João Miguel. "Despite Resemblance - Scale Models and the Representation of Architectural Objects." *Athens Journal of Architecture*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2019, pp. 77-98; Starkey, Bradley. "Architectural Models: Material, Intellectual, Spiritual." *Architectural Research Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3-4, 2005, pp. 265-272; Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Duke University Press, 1993.

Chapter One:

Architectural Models as a Form of Representation

- The Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC by McCullough Mulvin Architects

To begin my chapter I want to mention a quote from João Miguel Couto Duarte in which he states “Alongside other systems of representation, scale models are still trusted by architects to invent the world”.³ Architectural models not only represent our reality, but they help to invent it through their unique representational qualities. I will be using this chapter to speak about the importance of architectural models as a representation system in the work of architects. I will discuss the theoretical terminology of visual representation, bricolage, generative model making, immediacy and hypermediacy in relation to architectural models, while using the sketch model of the Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC as a point of reference for discussing these terms in relation to representation (see Fig. 1).

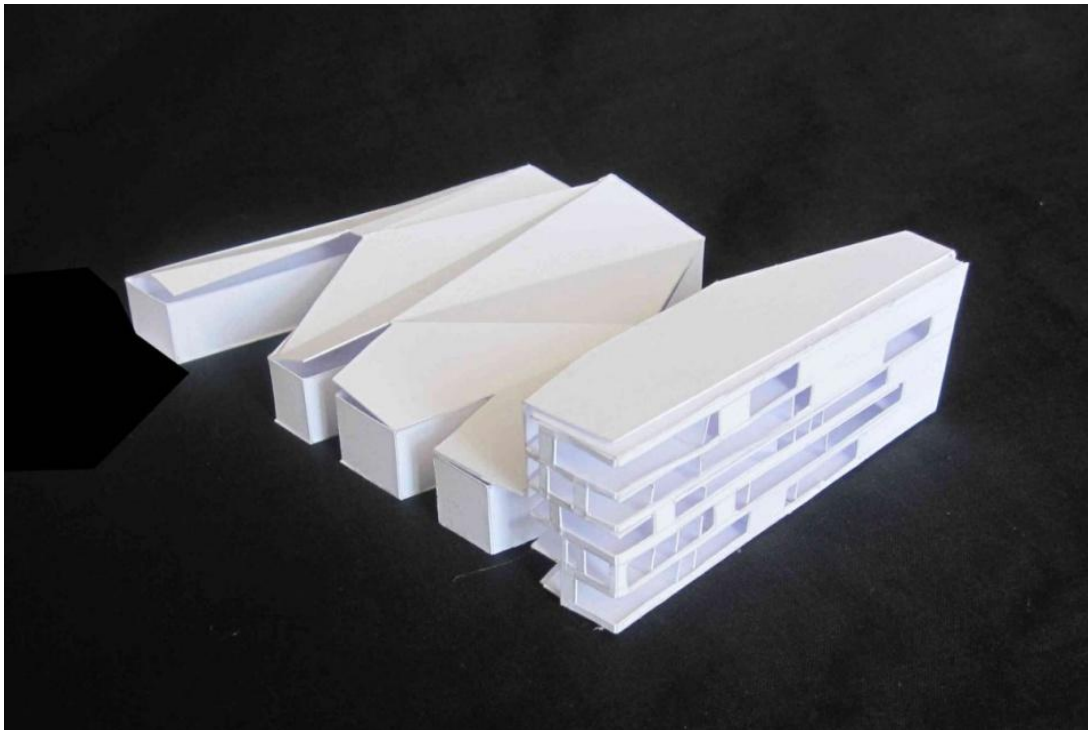


Figure 1. Sketch model of the Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research

³ Couto Duarte, João Miguel. “Despite Resemblance - Scale Models and the Representation of Architectural Objects.” *Athens Journal of Architecture*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2019, p. 77.



Figure 2. The Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC façade

The model of the Beaufort Laboratory was constructed by McCullough Mulvin Architects in 2010 and is an example of a generative model which aided the design process. It was necessitated during the design process as the roof angles required for the design could not be calculated using a two dimensional drawing and had to be realised in a miniaturised three dimensional form to confirm both their functionality and design impact. The building is located in Ringaskiddy, County Cork and is the “largest integrated maritime and energy research center in the world”⁴ (See Fig. 2). Due to its purpose as a research centre dealing with water, the specialised tanks required for testing in the building dictated the size and shape of its boundary walls. Contextual design is a very important aspect of the design work created by McCullough Mulvin Architects, who state:

We are a practice that are interested in a contextual approach to architecture in all our projects and exploring a layered approach and with a strong belief that with the layering of all the different aspects of design, of history, of culture, of time, of place, of weather, of erosion, makes projects more interesting and complex.⁵

⁴ “Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory, UCC.” *McCullough Mulvin*, <http://mcculloughmulvin.com/projects/beaufort-maritime-and-energy-research-laboratory-ucc>. Accessed 10 October 2021.

⁵ O’Connor, Ronan. “Finding a Re-Use that Fits – A Dialogue between Heritage and Contemporary Architecture.” *Adaptive Re-Use and Transition of the Built Heritage*, Architect’s Council of Europe, 23 November 2018, De Kanselarij, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands, Conference Presentation.

The architect's aim was to compliment the surrounding landscape of the building in their structural design. The firm wanted to echo the coastal landscape surrounding the building and acknowledge its close proximity to the wild water, while also containing controllable water; for this reason, the exterior of the building was designed to appear as a stone outcrop that has been weathered (see Fig. 3). The walls are deeply indented which is reminiscent of the action of wind and water on driftwood. All of these design choices were made possible through the use of sketch models throughout the process to aid with defining functionality and style.



Figure 3. Reference photos used by McCullough Mulvin Architects

Ease of understanding is created when using models to imagine concepts physically. Visual representation plays a huge role in creating a deeper comprehension of an architectural design, which is particularly evident with the model of the Beaufort Laboratory where the use of card to create a miniature building for experimentation with roof sloping meant the firm could understand what they were trying to achieve physically. The model is used as a tool to rationalise design choices and finalise ideas. Architectural models in general are a huge asset as they visibly show you your design flaws and structural downfalls. There is an ease in comprehending a three dimensional rendered miniature model that does not exist with any

other method of representation, such as architectural drawings or even digital modelling. To see an object in front of you is the simplest way to comprehend its intentions.

The architectural journal *Pencil Points*, which was established in 1920 and was produced for decades, repeatedly spoke about the power that a simple card model holds during the design process. When speaking about architectural card models, Harvey Corbett stated: “The value of an accurate model as an aid to study while designing a building is, I believe, beyond question. Such a model, enabling the architect to see his design as it will work out in three dimensions, supplies the deficiencies of his imagination.”⁶ As Corbett discusses in his article, we can sometimes face challenges as our imaginations are so boundless, however what is achievable in our imaginations is not always achievable in reality. We are faced with working within the parameters of our physical world and architectural models help to ground us in that reality. Architectural models create a bridge between conceptualisation and construction, where ideas can be explored and comprehended without major financial impact, while providing invaluable design information. The model is not only a vessel for representing a building, but also a representation of thoughts where immaterial dreams can be seen in reality. The model supplements for the shortcomings of the imagination. To have the ability to hold your thought in your hands is the ultimate form of visualisation for an architect.

The scale of a model plays a huge role in its effectiveness as a form of representation. The creator of a model becomes the dominant force in the creation process, due to the scale relationship. Transforming a building into a miniature that we can hold and manoeuvre in our hands presents the creator with an enlightening visual experience. Susan Stewart speaks of this phenomenon of encapsulation in her book *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*; “The reduction in scale which the miniature presents skews the time and space relations of the everyday lifeworld, and as an object consumed, the miniature finds its “use value” transformed into the infinite time of reverie.”⁷ As Stewart

⁶ Corbett, Harvey. “Architectural Models of Cardboard Part 1.”, *Pencil Points*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1922, p. 11.

⁷ Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Duke University Press, 1993, p. 65.

states, the miniaturisation depicted in a model breaks the rules of our everyday space and time relations with the 'lifeworld'. We are able to absorb a scene in its wholeness when viewing a miniature model. Due to this massive change in perspective, we are forced into a state of interpretation and reverie. This switch from our natural viewpoint to one of wide span information presents the creator with an alternative viewpoint of their design, which aids with their refinement and workflow. I will further discuss the importance of scale and scale comprehension in Chapters 2 and 3.

While speaking about material culture, Sherry Turkle emphasises the importance of learning through objects. 'Bricolage', as described by Turkle, "is a style of working in which one manipulates a closed set of materials to develop new thoughts".⁸ This process of thinking through making can be directly linked to how architects use architectural materials during the design process to develop ideas. Turkle places great value on the act of generating ideas through the use of objects, as it is an enriching experience between object and owner. This process of bricolage emphasises the educational benefits of physically creating models as part of the creative thought process, as it is defined as a primitive science. We can see that McCullough Mulvin Architects adapted the practice of bricolage while creating their sketch model of the Beaufort Laboratory as they brought together different shaped objects to allow their thoughts on the building shape to develop. These shapes were inspired by nature, namely cliff fronts, driftwood and waves, taken from reference photographs used by the architects (see Fig. 3). The architects took the geometric form of these natural features and blocked out their roof forms.

Generative model making is the process of creating a wide variety of potential design iterations until you arrive at the specific design you require. This practice involves learning through trial and error, which is an essential part of the architectural design process, as construction cannot begin until sound designs have been created. During the process, sketch models are employed to experiment with design ideas and their feasibility. These models will highlight any flaws or discrepancies in the design and can be continually manipulated until a desirable design is

⁸ Turkle, Sherry. *Evocative Objects: The Things We Think With*. MIT Press, 2007, p. 160.

achieved. Generative models can be described as “promising approaches towards [a] goal”.⁹ They are a form of evaluation of design work while simultaneously being a springboard to potential future design iterations. There was an abundance of models created during this project for roof analysis before a suitable solution was found. These progress models can be seen in Figure 4 and show the importance of physical manipulation of materials for results. Continual adaption of design is an essential part of any design process, but is especially relevant to architectural design in which the end goal is to create a design for a structure that will serve its desired purpose well and for an extended period of time. Bradley Starkey speaks about this process of generative model making, describing the model as a ‘critical research tool’. “By using the model as a critical research tool and one that is capable of generating rather than merely describing design ideas, the architectural model can integrate a hybrid synthesis of material *and* intellectual dimensions”.¹⁰ The model provides a new dimension for designers where they are not just intellectually thinking about their design, but are physically manifesting it through the use of materials. This is connected to the idea of bricolage in which the model engages both your mind and your eyes for a diverse experience. The architectural model should not be overlooked as merely an exact representation of a building or landscape, but rather utilised as an important research tool. McCullough Mulvin Architects employed this ‘critical research tool’ and showcased its success as a representational aid.



Figure 4. Progress models constructed by McCullough Mulvin Architects

⁹ Karpathy, Andrej, et al, “Generative Models”, *OpenAI*, 16 June 2016, <https://openai.com/blog/generative-models/>. Accessed 31 December 2021.

¹⁰ Starkey, Bradley. “Architectural Models: Material, Intellectual, Spiritual.” *Architectural Research Quarterly*, Volume. 9, No. 3-4, 2005, p. 271.

When speaking about architectural models as a form of representation it seems important to mention the topics of Immediacy and Hypermediacy discussed by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin in their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Immediacy is a visual style in which the aim is to cause the medium to be forgotten or rendered invisible to the viewer, while hypermediacy strives to highlight the medium and bring attention to its presence.¹¹

Architectural models sit somewhere along the border of immediacy and hypermediacy. Starkey speaks on this topic saying “one would expect architectural models to be perceived as hypermediatory. However this is rarely the case and the totality, three dimensionality, manoeuvrability and/or physicality of architectural models encourages the assumption that the model is the building.”¹² One would assume we would view the model for what it is; an assortment of architectural materials such as card or balsawood, lacking the colour or texture of the finished building. However, this is rarely the case, as we have been conditioned to look past the material of the model and imagine what possibility this material is representing. We overlook the present hypermediate state of the model and venture into the immediate state, viewing the object not for what it is, but what it could be. While we can clearly see that the model in Figure 1 is not a real building, we still look past the rudimentary nature of the model and imagine the possible building it is representing. This theory poses the question whether architectural models are deceptive or extremely successful representational forms.

I conducted a short interview with Louise Cotter of Carr, Cotter & Naessens Architects in which we discussed the importance of architectural models working as clear forms of representation. Louise made the very interesting point that digital models can be ‘misleadingly realistic’, thus causing confusion for spectators who may believe the building is already in existence rather than an image they are seeing that has been computer generated in an idealized digital world. Due to the potential deception in this uncanny territory of digital rendering, their architectural firm favours using the traditional technique of creating a physical architectural model and photographing it. We are living in an overwhelmingly digital age where older practices may appear to be becoming redundant. However, sometimes traditional methods of design cannot

¹¹ Bolter, Jay David, and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. MIT Press, 1999, pp. 20 - 52.

¹² Starkey, Bradley. “Architectural Models: Material, Intellectual, Spiritual.” *Architectural Research Quarterly*, Volume. 9, No. 3-4, 2005, p. 268.

be improved upon through the use of technology. Alexander Schilling also speaks about the topic of the digital model versus the physical model. He believes the two modeling styles should work in conjunction with each other rather than as opponents. “Virtual models will be helpful and are a justifiable additional means of representation. But they should be seen less as competing and more as acting together in a form of synthesis.”¹³ Neither model can outweigh the other in its importance, as both modeling techniques are highly beneficial. It is still important to recognize that the art of physical model making cannot be replaced by digital modeling as their impacts differ completely. The importance of physically modeling is particularly prominent with the model of the Beaufort Laboratory. As the model was used as a form of freehand experimentation, it gave the architects the opportunity to manoeuvre the materials they were working with to give definite visible answers. McCullough Mulvin Architects also created a digital rendering of their building design, which worked as an informational guide depicting where the water tanks would be situated within the building (see Fig. 5). In this regard the digital rendering is a more beneficial option than a physical model as it works as an info-graphic for individuals viewing the design work. The physical model had served its purpose as a generative aid and the symbiotic relationship between physical and digital representation models was able to occur.

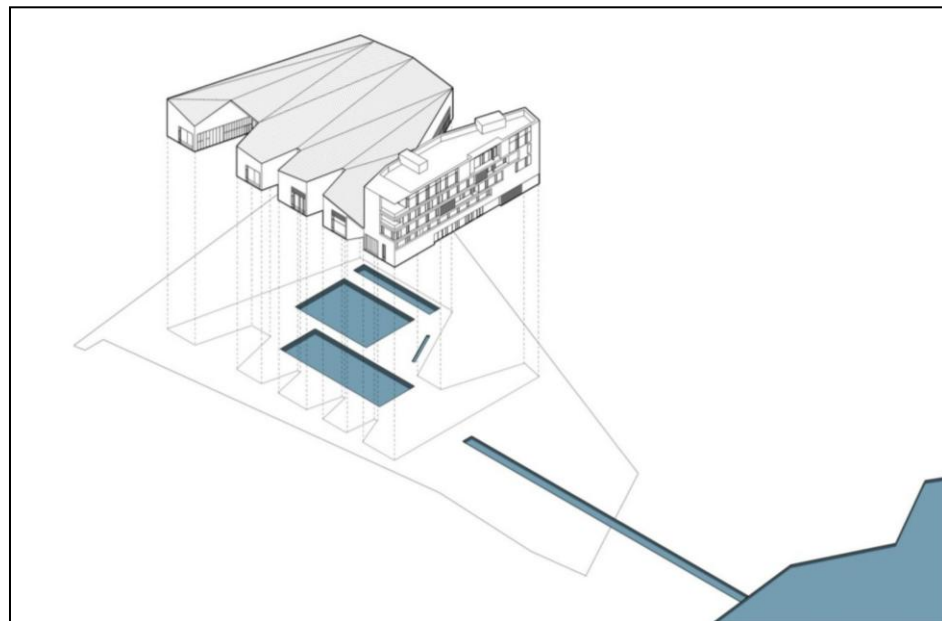


Figure 5. Digital rendering of the Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research Laboratory UCC

¹³ Schilling, Alexander. *Architecture and Modelbuilding: Concepts, Methods, Materials*. Walter de Gruyter, 2018, p. 197.

Whether a model is being used as a simple visual representation of an idea or being employed as a research tool, it is clear that architectural models offer huge benefits to their creators. I think it is evident that physical architectural models have become invaluable resources through the use of visual representation, bricolage and generative model building.

Chapter Two:

Architectural Models as a Form of Communication

– DLR Lexicon by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects

The simplicity an architectural model offers as a form of communication is one of the most powerful attributes the model has to offer. Chapter 2 will focus on the importance of architectural models as communication tools between the creator and the layperson. I will discuss the theoretical terminology of presentation models, comprehension of scale and the three dimensional language of architectural models while using the presentation model of the DLR Lexicon as a point of reference for discussing these terms in relation to communication (see Fig. 7).

The model of DLR Lexicon was constructed by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects for display in the Dún Laoghaire town hall for public viewing during the planning permission process of the build and is now housed in the DLR Lexicon Library on permanent display. Unlike the reference model in Chapter 1 which was used as a critical design tool, the model of the DLR Lexicon was constructed to be employed as a communication tool. After all the key design decisions for the building had been finalised, the presentation model of the DLR Lexicon was constructed to showcase the potential future building to the townspeople of Dún Laoghaire. The model's purpose was to clearly communicate the design of the building to the community that it would be used by and to aid in securing planning permission approval during the public consultation phase. Having succeeded in securing planning permission, the building was constructed on the Moran Park site in Dún Laoghaire, County Dublin (see Fig. 6). The design takes into account the former segregation of Moran Park caused by its split level landscape and unites the area in a clever design flow through the use of stone pathways. The building is a community focused cultural space, and has been divided according to public preference.

The building is organised into two distinct forms. Along Haigh Terrace is a regular sequence of intimate scaled rooms, workshops, meeting space and

reading rooms, with windows that address the street. The park-side of the building by contrast provides voluminous space.¹⁴

All of these public spaces draw in the outside surroundings with large coastal facing windows creating a unity between the coastal library and the sea it neighbours. Below, an image of the completed DLR Lexicon structure as it stands on the Moran Park site in Dún Laoghaire can be seen (see Fig. 6), and below this is an image of the architectural presentation model used by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects to exhibit their design concepts to the public before the construction process began (see Fig. 7). By comparing these two images we can see just how clearly an architectural model can communicate the design impact of a future structure. I will discuss this concept in further detail as the chapter progresses.

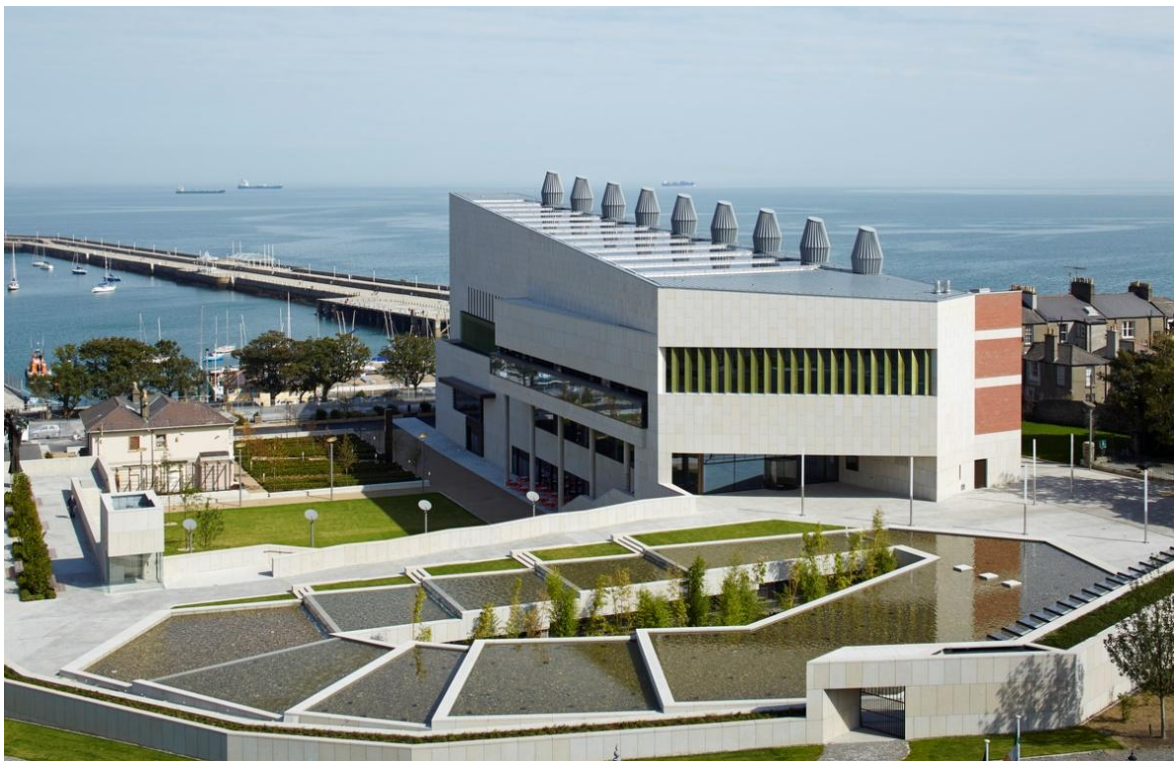


Figure 6. DLR Lexicon Library

¹⁴ "DLR Lexicon." *Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects*, <http://www.ccnarchitects.net/dlr-lexicon/>. Accessed 29 October 2021.



Figure 7. Architectural model of DLR Lexicon Library

The model of the Beaufort Laboratory used as a reference in Chapter 1 was employed as a design tool by the architect and was not intended for mass viewing, so did not need to be widely comprehensible or accurately finished. However, the model of DLR Lexicon was intended for use as a presentation model that would be viewed by a wide community. Presentation models, in the architectural sense, are models that accurately depict the building or landscape it is portraying as it will appear once it has been constructed. These models must be finished to a high degree of accuracy to the future design they are depicting to make the visual easily comprehensible for viewers outside of the architectural profession. Presentation models of buildings, such as the presentation model of the DLR Lexicon, are successful as communication tools because viewers of models are so easily able to comprehend scale. João Miguel Couto Duarte poses the idea that we are able to comprehend scale models with ease as we are raised from childhood playing with toys which are scaled objects. We do not have to actively learn to comprehend scale to understand an architectural model, as this process of comprehension has always been present in our lives. “Scale model comprehension, particularly

the notion of scale, is learned early in life and outside the scope of architectural representation.”¹⁵ We are not actively playing with scaled objects to learn about architectural representation as children, however; we do organically learn how to readily comprehend scale and understand the world of the miniature through the use of these scaled objects. When we play with our dollhouses, model train sets and miniature cars, we are opening our minds to the world of the miniature. I will discuss this practice in more detail in chapter 3 in relation to fascination. This understanding of scale we share as a society due to our childhoods spent playing renders the architectural presentation models an open form of communication.

While architectural drawings can convey a vast amount of information about a structure, they do not permit the same ease of understanding that a physical three-dimensional model offers. For an individual who has not studied within the field of architecture or construction, it may be difficult to interpret all the complexities a drawing contains. Leaving the architectural interpretation up to an individual’s imagination opens the possibility for misconception of design work. “On a sheet of paper, the impression of the space is individually formed in the mind of each observer, whereas in the model it is directly readable and can be seen in every case.”¹⁶ Physical models remove any potential ambiguity from an architectural design, as the design is rendered in its three-dimensional form as the architect intended. The architectural model gives a structure to an immaterial idea. It is a communication tool that is not hampered by the obligation to think visually, it is universally comprehensible. Every person does not have the ability to visualise a two-dimensional architecturally drawn concept in a three-dimensional manner, and architectural models remove this barrier between visual and non-visual thinkers. A person from any background with any level of knowledge in architectural models can understand that a presentation model is communicating the design of a building in a three-dimensional physical format.

¹⁵ Couto Duarte, João Miguel. “Despite Resemblance - Scale Models and the Representation of Architectural Objects.” *Athens Journal of Architecture*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2019, p. 94.

¹⁶ Schilling, Alexander. *Architecture and Modelbuilding: Concepts, Methods, Materials*. Walter de Gruyter, 2018, p. 30.

Simplicity of communication is one of the most powerful aspects the architectural model has to offer. The two images below showcase how architectural drawings and architectural models are used as communication mediums (see Figs. 8 & 9). Figure 8 shows an architectural drawing of the aerial view of the proposed DLR Lexicon layout. Figure 9 shows an image of the architectural model depicting DLR Lexicon from above. As can be seen from the examples; at a glance the ease at which the architectural model can be comprehended is greater than that of the architectural drawing which must first be studied to orientate oneself in the world of the structure. Architectural models create a level of realism that is not present in a two dimensional technical drawing. The strength of the architectural drawing lies in its ability to depict the internal structure of the library as well as the exterior walls, while the architectural model is purely an exterior rendering. This is not the case with all presentation models, as some are constructed in sections that can be lifted apart to reveal their internal structures or may have windows large enough to convey detail behind. It is evident from the examples that both architectural drawings and architectural models clearly convey the design intentions of the building and its surrounding landscape, however; the model immediately engages us making us aware of the potential three-dimensionality and mass of the future structure. Both the methods of communication through drawings and models have their benefits, but for the purposes of communicating with a public audience, the instant impression imparted by physical models makes them a valuable resource.

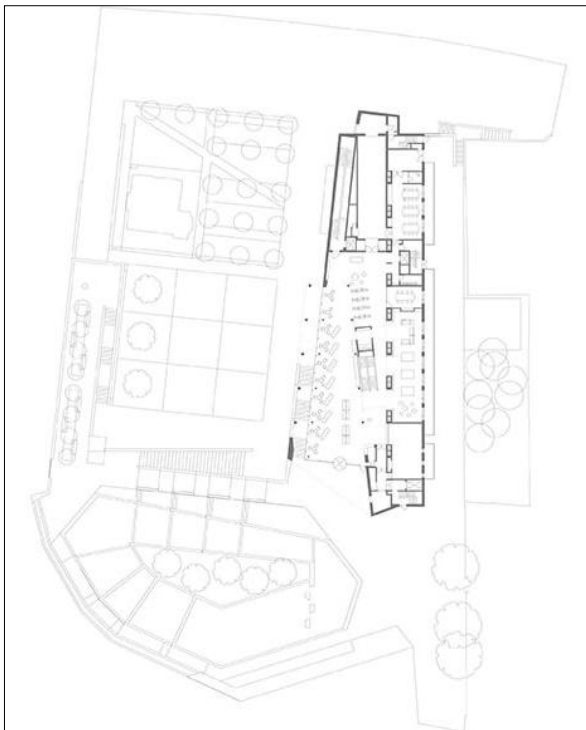


Figure 8. Architectural drawing of DLR Lexicon

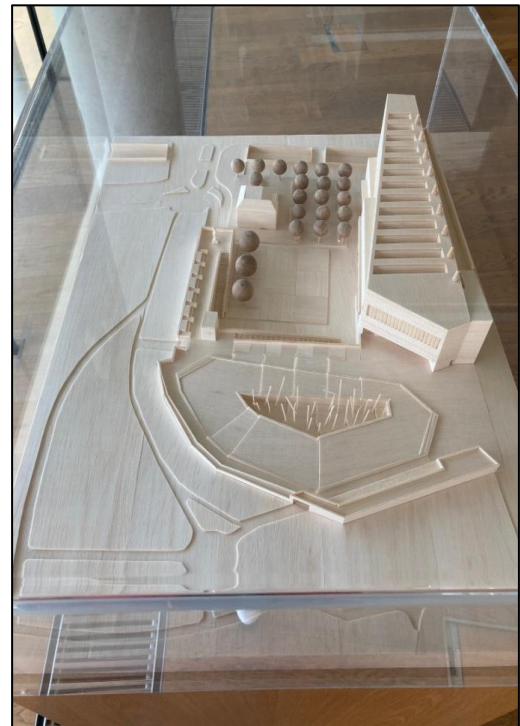


Figure 9. Aerial view of DLR Lexicon model

Models have no dependency on spoken language to convey their message. In fact it could be said that models are a three-dimensional language in themselves. Susan Stewart points to this when she says “[The miniature] is the closest thing we have to a three-dimensional language, for it continually points outside of itself, creating a shell-like or enclosed, exteriority.”¹⁷ The miniature is not only signifying itself, but is symbolising a greater structure. It is assumed a miniature is a depiction of something larger in existence or that will be in existence in the future. In the context of presentation models, like the example above of the DLR Lexicon, the meaning of the model does not have to be explained to the public viewers. The model speaks for itself in its portrayal of design work, thus it can be compared to a three dimensional language that is universally spoken. The model not only removes any potential misunderstanding between the architect and the client, but also removes communication barriers between people who do not speak the same language, thus architectural models have the power to unite people the world over.

In *The Art of the Architectural Model*, Akiko Busch brings forward the point that the size of an architectural model does not relate to its level of importance. “As a device that critically influences the final shape of our built environment, the architectural model has a value that far exceeds its miniature scale.”¹⁸ Architectural models have been a key asset in shaping our environment. Many of the buildings that exist today were first created as communicative models that were brought forward to a panel for discussion and subsequently approval. The small size of a model does not signify its impact during the design process in any sense. The visual impact delivered by an architectural model during the design pitch and construction process is unrivalled. These small scale objects have massive impacts on the success of a design during approval stages as they are objects that clearly communicate a vast amount of technical information seamlessly with a diverse range of people. For the architect, the model is an instant signifier of their design and its impact on the environment. Presentation models are an invaluable resource during the planning permission process of a build, not only to sell a design concept to a panel of investors and county council members, but also to showcase a design to

¹⁷ Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Duke University Press, 1993, p. 45.

¹⁸ Busch, Akiko. *The Art of the Architectural Model*, Design Press, 1991, p. 14.

the local community it will affect. The DLR Lexicon model was used as a communicative piece for the residents of Dún Laoghaire to view in the local town hall during the public consultation process. Models that are showcased in this way can often put the members of a community at ease about future developments, as they can see the beauty or functionality a structure will bring to their area and how it will shape their environment through the ease of communication offered by the model.

One area in which the model falls short in conveying the entire message of a building to the public is in its exterior finishing. Typically architectural models are constructed from clean white materials, like card or Foamex, or from thin wood sheeting, like the model of DLR Lexicon above, which has been constructed from balsawood. The finishes on these models do not accurately reflect the building materials that will be used to construct the future structure. This brings us back to the idea of Immediacy and Hypermediacy discussed in Chapter 1, in which the material of an architectural model is often overlooked in favour of the entire image the model is conveying. This is not to say that all models lack texture and colour, as many presentation models do exist in the exact style of the future structure. We can see from the model of DLR Lexicon that laser etching is sometimes used on models to create depth and further convey detailing, however, the exact detailing cannot be rendered at such a minute scale (see Fig. 10). This lack of colour and texture in models may lead to some design confusion for viewers, but overall the benefit of communicating a design through an architectural model outweighs this negative impact.



Figure 10. Three quarter view of DLR Lexicon Model

Intricately finished presentation models attract attention as people are fascinated by the miniaturisation of their society, especially if the model is a depiction of their local area. Martha Sutherland speaks of the presentation model being a psychological ploy in her book *Modelmaking: A Basic Guide*. “Adopted for the pragmatic reason that all the world loves a miniature, the presentation model is a psychological ploy. Any skilfully crafted object inspires delight, but when the object is also small in scale it has the universal appeal of a puppy, a bird’s egg, a dollhouse, or a jewel.”¹⁹ Presentation models can be employed as forms of manipulation and may increase the desire in viewers for the structure to be constructed, as they are so attracted to its miniature form. Architectural models aid in selling ideas as they have an endearing quality in their miniature nature that romanticizes the future structure. The model of DLR Lexicon draws in its audience due to its material, intricate detailing and the addition of stylised greenery (see Fig. 10). These aspects cause the viewers to engage with the model,

¹⁹ Sutherland, Martha. *Modelmaking: A Basic Guide*, W. W. Norton & Company, 1999, p. 9.

peering into its casing and analysing the space. The architect is taking advantage of one of their greatest communicative devices to ensure they have the best possible chance at securing design approval.

The model as a form of communication is an invaluable asset that unites creator and viewer in understanding of an architectural concept. The complexities of the architectural sector are removed and the design work becomes an open source of communication that can be witnessed by all audiences. I think it is evident that by utilising the presentation model, wide spread scale comprehension and the three-dimensional language of models that the information contained within architectural models is freely accessible to all who can view them.

Chapter Three: Architectural Models as a Form of Fascination – Babel by Aidan Lynam

I used the previous two chapters to discuss the practicality and functionality of architectural models within an architectural context. In this chapter I want to discuss our inherent fascination with models and the miniature worlds they present us with. I will discuss the theoretical terminology of miniaturisation, visual representation, scale and exhibition while using the architectural model entitled ‘Babel’ created by Aidan Lynam as a point of reference for discussing these terms in relation to fascination.

Babel is unlike the examples I have used in the previous chapters, as it does not depict a singular building, but rather numerous façades of recognisable buildings from Dublin city and its surrounding areas in a 1:200 scale. Dublin has been reimagined as a tower of congested property in which the city has been condensed into layers of soaring buildings. The model has been constructed from a combination of Perspex, Foamex and MDF to reflect the materials typical of that seen in architectural presentation models. The architectural sculpture was created in response to Ireland’s property boom and its subsequent collapse. The title, ‘Babel’, has a dual meaning. It represents the allegory of “The Tower of Babel” in which man’s ‘hubris’ caused the tower to never be completed, and Lynam has used “The Tower of Babel” as a direct reference to Ireland’s property collapse, including the Sean Dunne Tower which was not constructed to demonstrate this point in his sculpture.

The idea of turning the architecture of Dublin into a modern-day Tower of Babel felt like an apt way to represent the folly of recent property collapse. In the story, Mans hubris stopped the tower being completed so I included the proposed Sean Dunne Tower at Ballsbridge which was never built as a fitting pinnacle of a never-to-be completed tower.²⁰

The sculpture is also a reference to the language used by property developers and auctioneers when promoting the concept of never-ending building development.

²⁰ Lynam, Aidan. “RE: Research on Babel”, Received by Chloë Curtin, 30 Nov. 2021.

The work aims to encourage a critical examination of the societal changes and transformations that impacted on the built environment as well as the cultural, economic and political landscape of the country.²¹

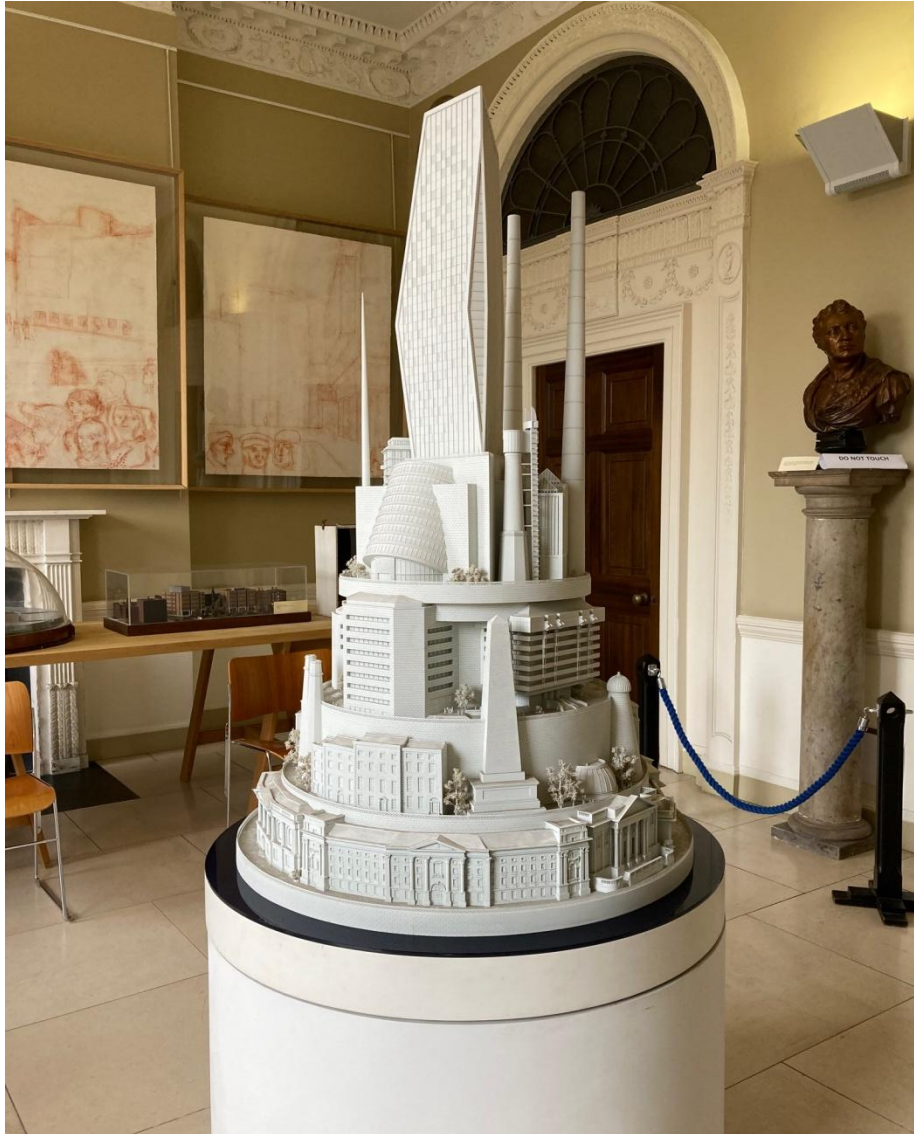


Figure 11. *Babel* by Aidan Lynam, architectural model, 2010

This is not merely a model of Dublin, but a statement about the society's relationship with its buildings. Unlike the models of The Beaufort Maritime and Energy Research

²¹ Information panel for *Babel* by Aidan Lynam, Irish Architectural Archive. "Babel by Aidan Lynam", December 2010 – Present, The Irish Architectural Archive, Dublin.

Laboratory UCC and DLR Lexicon which were created for direct use in the architectural field, *Babel* was created as an art installation. I wanted to include this example to show that architectural model-making does not have to be constrained to the parameters of the design and construction processes, but can be created for the purpose of being an object of fascination. The model is currently housed in the Irish Architectural Archive on Merrion Square, County Dublin. *Babel* stands impressively inside the doors of the archive as the focal point of the entryway (see Fig. 11).

The miniaturisation of our world is an enchanting prospect. Our focus is completely captured when we are faced with a miniature. The architectural model draws the viewer in, not just in its impeccable intricacy and precision, but in its inherent magical quality created by small scale objects. As with most miniatures, including the reference model for this chapter, the miniaturisation of an area, like that of Dublin City in *Babel*, presents the viewer with an experience they could never achieve in regular life, the ability to view a whole city in a few glances. The impact of this process of visual representation has the ability to create a sense of fascination within us. Claude Lévi-Strauss speaks of this process of comprehension of the miniature when he states; “In the case of miniatures, in contrast to what happens when we try to understand an object or living creature of real dimensions, knowledge of the whole precedes knowledge of the parts.”²² We first encounter the whole model and are then faced with the comprehension of the finer detail. This is an unusual experience for the viewer of a model in which they may feel gigantic in regards to their viewing subject. As I outlined in Chapter 1, there is also the opportunity for the viewer to acquire a greater grasp of the area they are viewing due to its miniature scale. Having the ability to view the entirety of a dollhouse, a train set or even the whole of Dublin City is an experience that is not true to life and thus the models giving us this ability have an enchanting quality. Below I have included an aerial image of Dublin City which I have labelled with a selection of the landmark buildings captured in *Babel* including Poolbeg Chimneys, the Convention Centre, George’s Quay Plaza, Liberty Hall, One Central Plaza, the General Post Office and the Spire (see Fig. 12). When we compare this with the

²² Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *The Savage Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1966, p. 24.

adjacent photograph of the sculpture *Babel* (see Fig. 13), which has been labelled with the corresponding buildings, we can see just how vast an area Lynam has been able to capture in this sculpture. The model, while removing the streets and lesser known buildings of the city of Dublin, is an incredible amalgamation of the notable buildings of Dublin that have been condensed into a pleasurable and immediate viewing experience. Although the model removes the realism of the city, its depiction creates a mesmerising image as do so many other models of fascination.



Figure 12. Aerial view of Dublin City with a selection of buildings from Babel labelled by the author

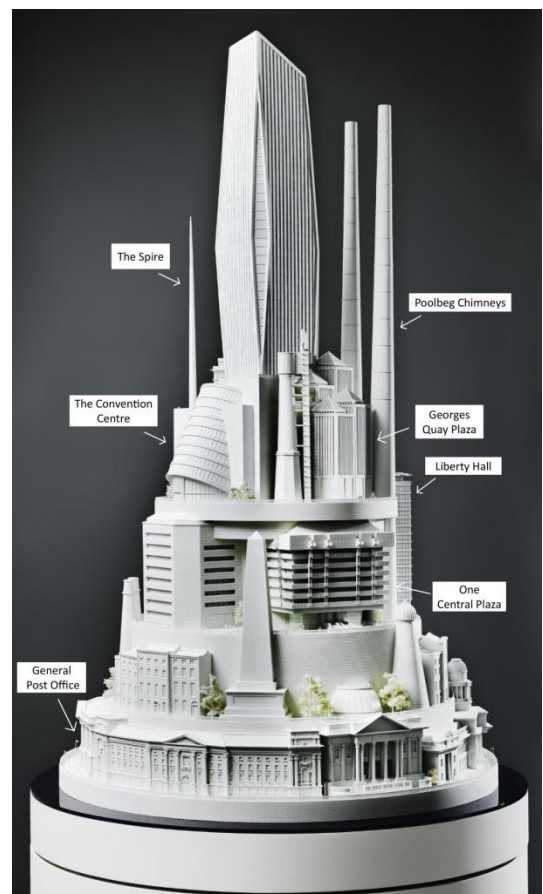


Figure 13. Selection of Babel buildings labelled by the author

This fascination we have with the miniature model may be linked to the lack of miniature in nature. Miniaturisation is the product of man-made activity. It is not possible for a miniature to be formed in nature, as living things are destined to be the scale they appear at and are not a miniaturised version of themselves, but exist at full scale no matter how small. The same cannot be said of the miniature, because miniatures intentionally play with scale, so as to portray an object smaller than it appears in the natural world. Our obsession with the miniature is fuelled by the fact you cannot just stumble across a miniature in nature; it must be specifically manufactured. Susan Stewart speaks of this lack of miniatures in the natural world causing fascination stating; “There are no miniatures in nature; the miniature is a cultural product, the product of an eye performing certain operations, manipulating, and attending in certain ways to, the physical world.”²³ Due to their absence in nature, when we encounter a miniature model we begin to compare the model to our three-dimensional world, revelling at the scale at which the structures and objects we know so well have been fabricated. As Stewart says, the miniature is a ‘cultural product’; it has been invented by people to be viewed by people. Cyclical enjoyment is created in this union between creator and viewer, where a fascination with the scale is shared. To be faced with an object that we cannot encounter freely in our society renders the viewing of models an elusive experience. The detailing in miniatures is what truly brings them to life. The subtle addition of brickwork, panelling and other constructed features adds depth to these models and enhances their believability as a real miniaturised world. This can be seen in the reference model for this chapter. The intricate detailing on the facades and the addition of foliage elevates the realism of the model and entices us to look more closely at the miniature world before us (see Figs. 14 & 15).

²³ Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Duke University Press, 1993, p. 55.



Figure 14. Close up photo of Babel showing Liberty Hall, One Central Plaza, the Customs House, St. Patrick's Tower and terraced Georgian houses



Figure 15. Brickwork and roof detailing of the General Post Office and terraced Georgian Houses

As discussed in Chapter 1, there is a power that comes with the miniaturisation of our world, and especially our cities which are so familiar to us. Akiko Busch speaks of the miniature offering the viewer a sense of authority. "Our enchantment with the miniature is rooted in the sense of power it instills in us. The world in miniature grants us a sense of authority; it is more easily manoeuvred and manipulated, more easily observed and understood."²⁴ When we view a miniature, we are seen as the dominating force in the relationship. We have the power to manipulate and manoeuvre these objects, like Dublin City portrayed in the model 'Babel', where usually we would be dwarfed in comparison to the scale of the life-sized versions of these miniatures; however, we are now rendered the conqueror.

²⁴ Busch, Akiko. *The Art of the Architectural Model*, Design Press, 1991, p. 11.

The model *Babel* included in this chapter is a fantastic example for showcasing how architectural models can expand past the borders of architectural modelling into a sculptural interpretation and artistic installations.

Architectural models are not limited to conjectures on the physical, built world. They can be small constructions drawn from the psychic universe, visual metaphors that express truths of the soul rather than the more mundane truths of engineering. Such models should not be dismissed as exercises in whimsy.²⁵

Artistic interpretations of the world around us can be just as informative as an accurate representation of a building, if not even more impactful, as the aim of a vast majority of artistic endeavours is to impart a message or cause an impact through the work. People associate architectural modelling with clean lined models; while these models play a vital role in the architectural sector, architectural sculptural models should not be overlooked. In fact, there is a deep connection between generative models, like that of the Beaufort Laboratory which I mentioned in Chapter 1, and architectural sculptural models similar to *Babel*, the reference point of this chapter, as they all begin their journey as merely a fantastical thought in someone's mind.

The importance of architectural models within museum and cultural centre contexts cannot be understated. Oftentimes museums and cultural centres will contain models that are pertinent to the information held within that building. A model can instantly impart so much information about a vast array of subject areas. You will seldom encounter a museum in which a model of some sort does not appear in an exhibition. In his book *In Miniature: How Small Things Illuminate the World*, Simon Garfield speaks of models acting as critical educational tools within a museum setting. "We would struggle to educate ourselves without models. They have been part of the intellectual architecture of museums for more than 200 years, and it is often the spatial encounter with these objects that makes a child's first encounter with a museum memorable."²⁶ He speaks of the memorable experience formed when a model is first beholden. This sensory interaction travels with us throughout our lives. Models have the ability to evoke an emotional response within us, making them a valuable asset in a museum context.

²⁵ Busch, Akiko. *The Art of the Architectural Model*. Design Press, 1991, p. 117.

²⁶ Garfield, Simon. *In Miniature: How Small Things Illuminate the World*. Canongate Books, 2018, p. 4.

They communicate their information visibly and impressively which can be desirable to viewers. The inherent fascination we have with the miniature fosters educational engagement between the public and the model rendering them an important visual learning tool in any exhibition space.

The Irish Architectural Archive would be classed as a cultural centre, as the location where *Babel* is housed it seems necessary to discuss how the model functions as an informational piece in this academic and cultural setting. *Babel* stands among a display of architectural models within the model room in the archive, acting as a beacon of architectural creativity, drawing people into the centre of the model space and thus creating an immersive environment which is focused on models (see Fig. 16). The instantaneous impact of the models in this building draws visitors into the architectural context of the building and its contents. *Babel* has the ability to communicate multiple societal and educational messages, depending on who is engaging with the model. This interactive experience of thought and vision that occurs is an essential asset for engagement within cultural centres and museums.



Figure 16. Model Room in the Irish Architectural Archive

This chapter offered an insight into why the architectural model in its miniaturised format is appreciated and admired. Not only is the model fascinating in its intricacies of scale and precision, but can also be an essential asset for public engagement within museums and cultural centres. The architectural model cannot simply be defined as a tool for the architect to utilise during the design process or a communicative ploy to sell a concept, but can also be an artistic creation to be marvelled at in pure fascination. Through the discussion of miniaturisation, visual representation, scale and exhibition it is clear that architectural models of fascination offer a diverse and important facet to the architectural world.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the relationship between architectural models and people, in both a professional and non-professional manner. My aim was to bring attention to the past neglect of the study of architectural models and emphasise the positive impact that architectural models have had within the Irish architectural sector and beyond. In our society, process can often be overlooked in favour of product. The architectural model is a prime example of this occurrence. Once a building is constructed, hours of design work and experimentation are often forgotten. We assign a status to the building that is not reflected towards the model as most are put into storage or disposed of once the construction process begins. Many of the buildings that occupy our environment today would not be in existence without the aid of an architectural model. Our living environments, social environments and cultural environments have all been impacted by architectural models. It is vital to remember that architectural modelmaking is an artistic practice that has always, and will continue to, shape the environment we inhabit.

The reference models I chose for this thesis have all been designed and fabricated by Irish architectural firms and individuals. These examples have shown the different ways in which architectural models have impacted our society through their ability to represent, communicate and fascinate. The models define three separate and vastly different roles architectural models can play. In Chapter 1 the interaction is solely between architectural firm and model, and this closed relationship aids in thought and design development through physical representation. The model of the Beaufort Laboratory does not require a high level of finishing, nor must it be manufactured from a lavish material, as the model's sole purpose is to work as a visual aid for its creators to enhance their thought process. The material the model is constructed from dictates its longevity; in this case the model has been constructed from white card, a cheap and easily maneuverable material that is not intended for long term display. In Chapter 2, the spectator is introduced into the dynamic between model and architectural firm. This addition of a third party redefines the usage of the model of DLR Lexicon and thus alters how it must be manufactured. The model can no longer be rudimentary or non-descript in its detailing. The addition of an external audience to the viewership of a model introduces a new

form of modeling in which precision and accuracy are paramount and hardwearing architectural materials such as balsa wood and Perspex should be used if the model is to reside on public display. Chapter 3 continues on this theme, but also shows us that architectural models don't need to strictly conform to the architectural profession and may be a statement about our society or a descriptive piece of artwork as 'Babel' so clearly highlights. This venture into the world of artistic statement brings architectural modeling to the attention of the layperson as a subject of fascination. This shift from the architectural sector redefines the narrative of the architectural model and shows it cannot be contained by the barrier of the world of construction.

While all separately distinctive, these models are also closely comparable. Each model mentioned serves a different purpose, yet they all have common qualities. The models all have the same core properties of representation, communication and fascination to different degrees. Each model is a representation of a building, or buildings, in a miniaturized format. Each model communicates a message in a three dimensional format without the need for words. Each model creates a sense of fascination for its viewer, architect or otherwise. All models use these aforementioned qualities to their advantage. By employing these qualities each model is creating a level of understanding of a particular building, or set of buildings, in three dimensions. This three-dimensional rendering creates a level of understanding that cannot be achieved in two dimensions and brings about a stronger sense of understanding than any other representational or communicational medium. This unique quality encompasses the power of the architectural model.

Having examined these three architectural models in depth, it is clear to see their impact within the architectural sector and outside of it is immeasurable. These three models were created by architects, artists and modelmakers based in Ireland and are just a small sample of the architectural models that are being created all over the world and being used to enhance the understanding and appreciation of the craft.

From my study of architectural models, I can conclude that the positive implications of models in the Irish architectural sector are plentiful. This reflection on Irish architectural models is important as our society is growing evermore visual and seeing the significance of learning through practical and visual practices. This speaks directly to the topic of architectural modelmaking which has been overlooked in its field, but should be accredited for its individuality in the architectural sector as a critical resource tool, a form of public presentation and a true work of art. Ultimately this thesis showcases that the architectural model's depiction of the world in three dimensions creates a level of understanding that is unrivalled by its two dimensional counterparts and that architectural models are an integral part of our society.

Appendix

Interview Transcripts:

Email correspondence between author, Chloë Curtin, and interviewee, Aidan Lynam, the creator of 'Babel'

Email 1 – 22nd Nov 21:

Hi Aidan,

My name is Chloë Curtin, I am a final year student in IADT studying 3D Design, Modelmaking and Digital Art. I am currently in the process of writing my thesis and I would love to include your model 'Babel' that is housed in The Irish Architectural Archive as a reference. Colum from the IAA gave me your contact details.

My thesis centres around architectural models as forms of representation, communication, and fascination. Having visited the architectural archive and viewing your model; I think it would be the perfect example of a model of fascination. It is truly a magnificent piece of work.

I am wondering if you would be willing to answer a few questions I have about the model either over email or by call, whichever is your preference. I would really appreciate any input you'd be willing to have with my project.

I look forward to hearing from you,
Kind Regards,
Chloë Curtin.

Email 2 – 22nd Nov 21:

Hi Chloe,

Thanks for your kind words. I'm glad you liked the sculpture.

I'm more than happy to answer any questions I can about Babel and assist in anyway.

I'm up to my eyes at the moment so probably best if you email any questions you have and that way I can give more time in answering them for you.

It was nice to hear from you and I look forward to providing any assistance I can.
Best of luck with your Thesis,
Aidan

Email 3 – 22nd Nov 21:

Hi Aidan,

Thanks so much for getting back to me. I have a few questions but take your time with the responses, life is hectic!

1. What materials has the model been constructed from?
2. What year was the model finished?
3. Did you use technical drawings in the process of your build?
4. Was it always your goal for the model to be showcased as a statement piece in a cultural centre?
5. What is your personal opinion on the importance of architectural models in cultural centres and museums?

Please feel free to include any additional information or photos you would like mentioned about your work. I'm interested in all aspects of Babel!

Thanks for your time,
Chloë.

Email 4 – 30th Nov 21:

Hi Chloe,

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you. I've been swamped under here with projects and sick kids. Below is an outline of the sculpture and hopefully answers your queries.

I completed the sculpture in 2010 as an artistic response to Ireland's 'Celtic Tiger' property boom and the resulting consequences of its collapse. I had been thinking of ways to use my background as an artist and professional modelmaker to represent the boom and bust in an interesting way that would reflect both practices.

I worked in the area of scale models and had been close to the construction industry through my profession. It occurred to me that an architectural model would be an interesting way to approach the subject matter by reappropriating the kind of language and representation that had been typically used by developers to sell properties.

I used this medium and combined the idea with the allegory of The Tower of Babel as a representation of the property bubble. The Tower of Babel is understood as an allegory of hubris and folly.

The idea of turning the architecture of Dublin into a modern-day Tower of Babel felt like an apt way to represent the folly of recent property collapse. In the story, Mans hubris stopped the tower being completed so I included the proposed Sean Dunne Tower at Ballsbridge which was never built as a fitting pinnacle of a never-to-be completed tower.

I wanted the piece to take the form of an architectural model and present it in the way they are normally displayed at marketing suites to sell a proposed future development. I made the piece at 1:200 and constructed it using a combination of Perspex, Foamex and MDF. I wanted to use a scale and incorporate the type of materials typically used for this type of a model in marketing suites.

I used AutoCAD to draw up a lot of the buildings. I was quite lucky to find some technical information about the various buildings online and at The Architectural Archives. In other cases I had to rely solely on photography as reference material.

The sculpture was created to represent a conventional architectural model, and I had hoped it would as such been seen in a public area like a gallery or cultural centre instead of a private space.

I have always been drawn to the aesthetic of scale models, especially the more muted and stylised types. A digital image presents the spectator with a specific view. In contrast, a scale model encourages the viewer to interact with the piece and move around it viewing it from multiple angle and viewpoints. Even in a digital age, CGIs lack the immediacy and directness of an architectural model. It's this directness that will always be the strength of a scale model.

They are powerful tools of representation and I believe strongly that scale models will always have an important place inside cultural spaces.

I hope this covers your question. Sorry if it was a little rambling. Please do not hesitate to get back to me if you need anything else. I have included some images that may be useful. Best of luck with your thesis and final year projects.

Best regards,

Aidan

Email 5 – 16th Dec 21:

Hi Aidan,

I just wanted to send on my thanks for your wonderfully comprehensive answers to my questions. It was massively appreciated. I have just submitted my thesis chapter, and your contribution has been invaluable. I hope it does justice to your fantastic artwork.

Thanks for everything,
Chloë.

Email 6 – 16th Dec 21:

Hi Chloe,

You're so welcome! Best of luck with your Thesis.

Best regards,
Aidan

Email correspondence between author, Chloë Curtin, and interviewee, Louise Cotter of Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects

Email 1 – 26th Sep 2021:

Hello,

My name is Chloë Curtin, I am a final year student in IADT studying 3D Design, Modelmaking and Digital Art. I am currently in the process of writing my thesis which centres on the idea of architectural models being used as a form of representation and communication. I plan to use the Dlr Lexicon library model which is currently housed in the library as a reference point in my thesis.

I am currently trying to get in contact with the model maker who fabricated the model to discuss the construction process with them. I would really appreciate if you could inform me if the model was made internally in your firm or if it was constructed by an external model maker or if you could provide me with a brief paragraph about how the model helped you in your process.

Any help would be greatly appreciated!

Kind Regards,
Chloë Curtin.

Email 2 – 27th Sep 2021:

Chloe

thanks for your email.

the model was made internally using sheets of balsawood glued together.

that model was made by Shane Kavanagh assisted by others but Shane no longer works in the office.

there were no special techniques used but a lot of care and patience!

if you have specific questions send them on.

kind regards

Louise Cotter

Email 3 - 29th Sep 2021:

Hi Louise,

Thank so much for your detailed response.

I would be grateful if you could give me a brief answer to the following questions:

- How did the model of the Lexicon Library aid your company during the design and development process?
- Was this model used to communicate your design to get it approved for construction?
- Do you feel architectural models are a key part of your design process?

If you have any personal opinions about architectural models that you would like to include all opinions/feedback are very welcome!

Thank you so much for your time,

Kind Regards,
Chloë Curtin.

Email 4 - 29th Sep 2021:

Chloe

that model was made after key design decisions so not used as a design tool, but a communication tool.

we had produced rough card models at previous stages which were more exploratory.

i enclose photos of our office-you can see a white card model of dlrLexicon in one...

the model was made for public display in the town hall during the planning process. approval for construction took place later.

yes, models are very useful and if made in cheap materials like card can be done ad-hoc to test solutions.

even for competitions, we prefer to make a model and photograph it rather than use CGIs which are misleadingly realistic.

i hope this answers your questions



kind regards

Louise Cotter

Email 5 - 29th Sep 2021:

Hi Louise,

Thank you so much for all this information! It will be so beneficial during my writing process.

Thanks again,
Chloë.

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